THE

CONVERTION

OF

Francis de Neville,

THE

POPES MISSIONARY

AND

CAPVCHIN PREACHER.

VVherein many secrets of the *Romish* Clergy are revealed.

WITH

A Narration of the Authors Life.

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TO THE MOST HIGH AND HONORABLE COVRT of PARLIAMENT of *England*, now assembled in the yeer of the Lord, 1642.

Most Illustrious Assembly,

WE owe the homage of Service in those places where we first breathed, not where we were conceived; this little Treatise had indeed his conception beyond the Seas, but being brought into the world in the Land, and in the time of Your Authoritie, it is to You it oweth homage, and to whom it is bound to render all the dutifull submissions a vassall oweth to his Lords, and will account it self exceeding glorious, if ye but daign to vouchsafe it with your favorable acceptance: for it trusteth, that once being acknowledged for Yours, it will be the more welcome in other places; and your Patronage alone will be a sufficient protection to defend it against all the attempts of its enemies and evill willers.

And I am fully perswaded it could never have

obtained a more happy nor Honorable protection in this world; For, that famous Assemblie consisting of the supreme and royall Majesty (as the most worthie Head thereof) of the Illustrious Nobilitie, and the choicest Persons of the whole Kingdom, as the Members of it, there is none in this State, who will not think themselves obliged to receive it favourably; and if it shall passe the Seas to travell through forraigne Countreys, it will (questionles) be more regarded, there being no Canton in *Europe* where the wisdome of this Noble Assemblie is not admired and redoubted, and where all that it avoweth and protecteth, is not highly prized.

But as there is no good thing in the world which meeteth not with some contrarietie, no vertue that is not opposed, no prosperity that is not crossed, I doubt not but it will find contradictions and obstacles both at home and abroad; at home, from some evill Christians, secret enemies of the peace and tranquillitie of this Church and Estate; abroad, from the Enemies of the truth, and every where, from envious and malicious spirits.

But I trust it shall be as the nest of the little *Alcion*, which under the protection of the most High, contemneth the surging billows of the Ocean, and which though tossed with the waves, remaineth still victorious above the floods. Or rather as the

Rocks

Rocks which cannot be moved with ſtormes, but continue firm againſt all the aſſaults of winds and tempeſts.

So, I ſhall let it travell under thoſe favourable hopes with expreſſe charge to proclaim in all places where it ſhall paſſe, the greatneſſe of your glorie. While in the meane time, I ſhall endeavour to ſhelter my ſelf here from all dangerous ſtormes under the ſhadow of your wings, to enjoy the ſweetnes of peace and happines which this whole Land expecteth from your wiſdom, and one who for the glory of God hath ſought hither for refuge, (as I) may hope from your bountie.

And there in greater ſecuritie than the Dove that is chaſed by the Hawks, doth find being once gotten into the holes of the Rock, I ſhall meditate the reſt of my dayes the wonders of the Almighty, and earneſtly pray to him, that it would pleaſe him to poure out upon their royall Majeſties, and their Princely Progenie, upon your moſt Honorable Perſons, and this whole Land, all the heavenly and earthly bleſſings that can wiſh.

Moſt Illuſtrious Aſſembly,

Your moſt humble and obedient Servant,

London this 28. of *March*, 1642.

FRANCIS DE NEVILLE.

Authoris Submissio

SAcrosanctæ & Individuæ Trinitatis, Catholicæ & orthodoxæ Ecclesiæ authoritatis, & omnis sanæ sinceræ & non præoccupatæ mentis judicio & censuræ, hæc quæ scripta sunt hic subiecta sunto.

To the Reader.

FRiendly Reader, if you finde any thing faulty and unpolisht in this Booke, Know that the English tongue is strange to the Author, to whom newly, and (as it were) miraculously escaped out of Popish persecutions and strict imprisonment, Tranquillitie and many other accommodations were wanting, requisite for the perfection both of composition and impression: yet nevertheless, if you understand French, the Authors naturall Language, may supply what is here defectuous; and if it come againe to the Presse, you shall have every thing more exact and perfect, in the meane time, be favourable in all, and especially in some faults occasioned by the Printer; such as are these following.

Errata quædam.

PAge 15. v. 24. Bishops, lege Doctors. p. 43. in Tit. Spirit of the p. 268. ~~is infallible, & unerrable~~

AN

AN HISTORICALL PRELVDE CONCERNING THE AVTHOR.

CHristian and courteous Reader, *there is nothing in the World made for it ſelfe, but all for man, and man for God, who is the laſt end of all things; and as the members of one body doe ayde and ſerue one another, for the enjoying the priuiledges and felicitie their nature is capable of; ſo men, being* Members of the ſame body, whereof Chriſt is the Head (*as* S^t^ Paul *ſaith*) *ought to ſerue one another, to bring themſelues to God, who is their laſt end and bleſſednesſe. It is that which moued the Apoſtles to Preach the Goſpell through the world, with ſo great trauaile and paines: It is that motiue of charitie that moued* S^t^ Paul, *and others, to leaue vnto vs the Writings and doctrines which we haue in the Canonicall Books: It is onely this Conſideration alſo that hath engaged mee to vndertake this preſent Treatiſe, wherein I onely intend to lead and conduct you to God.* 1 Cor. 12. 21. 3.

If you walke ſtraight to the paths of the true Church and faith, I intreat you in reading this Treatiſe to giue thankes and praiſes vnto God with mee, for the mercies and marvailous deliverances he hath wrought for mee, in bringing me out of darknesſe and from the ſhadows of death: If you waver and be in doubt of the truth of the way, you will finde here matter to aſſure and confirme you: And if you be gone aſtray out of this way, I hope reading this Diſcourſe, you ſhall be directed into it againe; Eſpecially if you be in the Romiſh Church, it is to you chiefly I

speake, and for whom I write this, hoping examples will be of greater power then words with you.

For friendly Reader, *I have been a long time even as you in the same blindnesse and doubtings you are in; and because I was told that it behooved mee to beleeve without further enquiry, and have onely the good faith (as they say) of the Colliar, which is to referre himselfe to the faith of his Curate without further examination: I assayed to doe the same, bending my will that way, but so soone as I began to have a little judgement, I had a thousand combats in my minde in that blinde obedience, which I could not see grounded upon any sure foundation. I heard of an holy Scripture, but I was almost twenty yeares old before I knew what it was: I was permitted, yea, and recommended to reade and learne, even by heart,* Virgil, Cicero, Homer, *and* Plutarch, *all of them Pagan & prophane Authors, and proper to teach paganisme & the Idolatry of the false gods; no man desiring mee to reade or learne the holy Scriptures, which the holy Ghost left to make us wise unto salvation, and to instruct us in Christianitie and the worship of the true God, as the Alphabet and rudiment of Christians. Is not this a strange malice or blindnesse?*

All that was spoken to me in matter of faith was, that it behooved mee to beleeve without further search, and refer my selfe to the faith of our Teachers. And what? (did I often say in my selfe) If those who lead us, be blinde or dissemble the truth through perversenesse, or for other interest; the blind leading the blind, both must fall into the ditch; Mat. 15. 14. *if our Leaders will goe to hell and be damned, I shall then be as they referring my selfe to them: I saw they were but men full of infirmities and imperfections as others, that their words were words of men subject to deceit and lyes; where I did finde nothing sure to settle a firme beliefe, so that I did conclude in my selfe, that faith being a certain knowledge and beliefe, it could not be sure but upon a certaine and infallible foundation; and so I concluded there was nothing but the Word of God alone, and not the word of man that could assure us of true faith, and of the way to salvation; and that that Word of God being left to us in the holy Scriptures, it was the dutie of every man to search and examine, if the faith and doctrine preached were conformable to it, and that no wise and judicious man should refer himselfe to another; every one being to give an account for himselfe in the day of Gods Judgement, and none received there to warrant and baile another.*

This then moved mee to compare the doctrine of faith which was taught mee, with that which Jesus Christ did preach; and there I found

so

ſo great difference in many points, that it might be ſaid to be altogether another doctrine than that of the Sonne of God. Happy was it for mee I underſtood the Latine as my Mother tongue; for I was above twentie yeares old, before I durſt reade or keepe by mee the Bible in the vulgar tongue, under paine of greater Excommunication (ſaid they) then is pronounced againſt one who ſhould reade a Booke of the Black Art, or kill his father or mother, and there is none but the Pope alone hath power to doe it, or can give Licenſe; Even ſo did I obtaine it by that meanes (but this by the way;) They produced indeed for every thing the holy Scripture, but for the moſt part in a meaning ſo far different from the truth, that there is no error, hereſie, nor diſſolutneſſe, which may not be grounded and maintained in like manner upon and by the holy Scriptures.

I did heare them ſpeake of Traditions, and that we ought to ſubmit our ſelves to the meaning and judgement of the Church; but when I came to examine the Church, and the infallibilitie of thoſe Traditions, I found that all was reſolved in the judgement and head of the Pope alone, who being elected and choſen by ſuch humane or rather worldly or rather diabolicall meanes, ſo often deceived in his judgements, ſo ſubject to vices and infirmities, yea and ſo uncertaine of his owne ſalvation; I could not ſee how that could be a ſure ground of a firme beliefe, ſuch as ought to be that of our faith, there being no place in the holy Scripture that giveth him either right to judge or infallibilitie to doe the ſame; (as I ſhall ſhew more amply, with other things;) ſo that I did imagine all this to be onely an humane invention and deceit, flowing from the ambition and power of the Pope, ſo dazel the eyes of the ſimple and weaker underſtandings, and a refuge for want of the Word of God, to maintaine the doctrine taught in that Church.

Thoſe conſiderations did ever ſencibly move me, and the more I grew in age and continued in the ſtudy and meditation of Theologie and holy Writings, the more alſo did increaſe the impreſſions and commotions they made in my ſpirit, and though often through ſcrupulous ſimplicitie I endeavoured to confirm my ſelfe, and baniſh thoſe doubts & thoughts, according to the Command they gave me, yet the truth did appeare ſo ſtrong and evident, that I could not but ſuſpect the doctrine of that Church, and as thoſe doubts did multiply within mee, the curioſitie and deſire to finde out the truth was alſo augmented.

And alſo becauſe I doe not remember to have met with any learned or judicious men, even of the Romiſh Church, which did not make mee to ſee in free Conferences, that they had the like doubtings, and

that they did not see sufficient ground in the Word of God for most Articles of the Romish beliefe.

All those Considerations being come to their maturitie, made mee resolve to come with courage and other necessary Circumstances out of the Kingdome of darknesse, where I had lived so many yeares, and give my selfe fully to follow the most holy truth; where I protest and confesse before God and the World, I have found more satisfaction and tranquilitie of minde, than ever I could meet withall so long as I was in the darknesse of ignorance and lyes.

But that I have no sooner taken my pen to give glory and praise to God, to whom it is due, and to edifie the Church; the indisposition of the time past giving me but small hopes of any good fruits from the seed I might have sowed before; moved me to delay even to this time and occasion; wherein the power of darknesse seemeth to be shaken in most Nations of the world; especially, pietie, justice, and truth, being likely to flourish in this Noble Kingdome of England, with greater libertie and splendour than ever, by the wisdome and zeale of this incomparable Parliament called by the great prudence of the high and mightie King Charles, and continued to this present, I have some hopes of more plentifull fruits, and that some may open their eyes more freely to search and know the truth, and doe as I have done, as I wish they would doe. Besides, I having been marvilously delivered not long since from a hard captivitie of ten moneths, occasioned by the onely treachery and inhumanitie of my younger brethren much obliged to me. But as Papists angry at my conversion, contrary to all the oathes of securitie they so often made to mee, (my occasions calling me amongst them;) But God of his grace having not onely delivered mee beyond all humane expectation, but also made me the Instrument to bring to the knowledge of his truth, my owne Keeper, who was of the same order with mee, and the meanes of my deliverance; I have now more obligation than ever to give glory to God, and wish that all men were in the straight paths of the faith, to give more perfect praises to God for all his favours.

It is not my intention to treat here amply of all the Controversies of Religion, an infinite number of grave and worthy Authors having already done it, more learnedly, exactly and curiously, than I could, to whom I remit the curious, and those who have the leasure and desire to be further informed.

But that which I pretend in this little Treatise, is onely briefly to deduce the reasons which have most troubled and vexed my spirit, advertising you, that I shall onely use the Versions in this Booke which are received

ceived in the Romiſh Church; to wit, the vulgar they attribute to S. Jerome for the Latine, and that of the Doctors of Lovaine for the French, to the end the ignorant who know not what the Scripture is, take not occaſion to ſtumble here, and ſay (as their cuſtome is) all is impoſture and deceit.

God forbid, I ſhould ſeeke applauſe or glory of any thing (wee have no good but that which commeth from God;) but I may ſay truly I was not accounted ignorant in the Romiſh Church; for beſides the ſtudy of Philoſophy, and Theologie, and others, wherein I ſpent many yeares, I was imployed above twelve yeares in Preaching, by expreſſe Commiſſion from the Generall of the whole order of Capuchins, where I was; and by priviledge and eſpeciall Letters from the Congregation of Cardinalls at Rome, I was the Popes Miſſionary above ſeven yeares; a favour imparted but to few, for the great and extraordinary power they have, moving jealouſie even almoſt to all the Biſhops. And though I have been a ſinner, full of imperfections, and will not nor cannot gloriſie my ſelfe in any thing before God or men; yet the charges of Superioritie in divers Monaſteries, of Deputie in many Provinciall Aſſemblyes, of Confeſſor in ſundry places, of Miſſionary in many Cantons, where I have been and was actually imployed when I left the Romiſh Church, evidence ſufficiently the opinion and eſtimation which was had of me in the order I was of; paſſing with ſilence the applauſe and affection of peoples in many Cities and Countryes, ſufficiently knowne to thouſands. But to God be the glory and honour, before whom I proteſt (worthy Reader) I ſhall write nothing here but the ſimple truth ſincerely, as I thinke and know it, according to the true feeling I have.

Let no unreaſonable ſcruple, or vaine feare, divert you from reading this Treatiſe; for there is no Commandement under heaven, can hinder you to ſeeke your ſalvation, and to ſee and enquire if you be in the right way or not. You will reade willingly, a Comedie, a Roman, a booke of love or ſongs without ſcruple; Wherefore will you not reade this, that concernes your ſalvation? If the Pope forbids it, it is becauſe he is intereſſed; but none ought to be received Judge in his owne cauſe. Beſides, have you never heard that of the Prophet Iſaiah, My people are captive, becauſe they are without knowledge; and that of our Saviour, Mat. 22 29. Yee erre, not knowing the Scriptures. Iſai. 15. 3. Mat. 22. 29.

And as I deſire nothing but your profit, and Gods glory, ſo ſhall you not ſee here any affectation of vaine eloquence; but onely ſtrong reaſons ſet down in ſo eaſie a ſtile, that the moſt ſimple may underſtand the ſame; and when you have conſidered my doctrine, I am aſſured you ſhall finde

it Orthodox and truly Catholike; altogether conformable to the doctrine of Jesus Christ, and his Apostles, which is the onely Catholike veritie, and the onely intent of this Discourse.

Now I having lived so long time, and converted amongst the Romish Church, and had so many occasions and imployments to perceive and discover all the inventions, subtilties, abuses and deceits thereof; I doubt not but I shall speak many things unknowne to those who have not lived amongst them; and many even of those who lives amongst them are ignorant of, and many whereof an infinite multitude of persons, (otherwise of good natures and well bred) take no notice at all, and many things which most men know sufficiently and deplore, following the same onely by a forced necessitie; and many things also which divers maliciously dessemble, and desire them not to be divulged.

And if the light of the truth, which I purpose to set downe here, be hurtfull to the eyes of any man, questionlesse that will onely be to those bleere-eyed, who have their sight troubled with some malignant humour; and I am assured where it offendeth one, it will please thirtie. Although the Owles, which delight onely in the night and darknesse, cannot indure the light of the pleasant Sunne, which God maketh to shine upon us; he leaveth not off for that to display his beames upon the earth, whence daily we see he produceth an infinite number of rare and marveilous effects, and none can deny but that the Owles themselves receive often much good thereby.

I beseech the great God of light, that the truth which I desire to write may be profitable both to the sicke and the whole, to the eyes well disposed, and those that are not; and that this little Treatise, which is written for all, may be profitable to all. I beg from my heart, the grace and blessing of God to that end; without which, I acknowledge and confesse, he who planteth, or he who watereth, is nothing, nor can doe no- 1 Cor. 3. 7. thing. To him therefore who is the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, be all honour and glory, Amen.

THE

THE CHRISTIAN AND CATHOLIKE VERITIE.

CHAPTER I.

How the Romish Church acknowledge no other Judge in matters of faith but the Pope.

ONe of the points which ever troubled my spirit most when I was of the Romish Church, and ought certainly to move every wise and judicious man, is that they make the Pope of Rome alone infallible Judge of that faith which hath been taught & preached to us by Christ and his Apostles; for howsoever they say and preach often to the simpler sort, that it is the Church they hold for Judge; yet they confesse that that Church is principally seene in generall Councells, and that without the Pope of Rome the Councells neither are nor make up the Church, and have no power, certaintie, nor infallibilitie, but by the Pope alone.

For although all the Bishops, Patriarchs, and Cardinalls, yea, all the Christians of the world were assembled, they make not up (they say) a Church, if the Pope be not present himselfe, or by Deputy; because holding him for head of the Church, they are members

members without a head, which cannot make up a body, nor by conſequent a Church; and though they were all of one opinion in any point or Article of faith; all will be errour, if the Pope be of a contrary minde; and all that the Pope declares to be or not to be a point of faith, ought to be holden infallible, even though the reſt of the Church and Chriſtians be of a different opinion. And this is the common beliefe of the Romiſh Church, which is to be ſeene in thoſe Bookes they hold Orthodox, and preached in their publick Sermons: and though I know that many Prelates among them of great learning, and even ſo many famous Univerſities grudge mightily thereat; yet to publiſh or preach the contrary, is declared a matter of Excommunication and Anathema.

Where yee may obſerve that it fareth not with the Councells of the Romiſh Church, (which they affirme to be the true Congregation of the faithfull) as it doth with Parliaments, or generall meetings of the States of Kingdomes; where he that precedeth hath but one voice, or two at the moſt, and can neither pronounce ſentence, nor make any act but by the pluralitie of voices and ſuffrages of the Aſſembly; ſo that whatſoever is ordered or enacted, is juſtly ſaid to be ordered and enacted by the Parliament or Aſſembly.

But it is not ſo in their Councells, for although they diſcuſſe (it may be) and examine the queſtion or point of beliefe; all that nevertheleſſe is but in ſhew and ceremony; for the Pope is not obliged to ſtand to the opinions and voices of the reſt, but he alone pronounceth the ſentence, maketh the act, the point or Article of faith after his own fancy and mind; ſo that whatſoever is concluded and enacted in matter of faith, can onely be ſaid to be concluded by the Pope alone; the reſt having neither power to hinder, contradict, or cenſure him, nor refuſe his ordinances, except they will be reputed ſchiſmatickes and heretiques; for as he ſaith of himſelfe, he is the Vicar of God on earth, & hath all the power of Jeſus Chriſt: and the Councell of *Lateran* aſcribe to him that
Mat. 28. 18. of our Saviour in *Mat.* 28. 18. *All power is given to me in heaven and earth.* So it is wrongfully when they ſay the Church is Judge in matters of faith, but they ſhould ſay, it is the Pope alone; for ſuch indeed is their common doctrine, without which, men muſt beleeve amongſt them none can be ſaved.

Thus you ſee how all the faith of the Romiſh Church is grounded on no other foundation than the head and judgement of the

Biſhop

Biſhop of Rome, who for the moſt part is wickedly choſen by indirect courſes, as ſimony and force, having often times proved ignorant, ungodly, abhominable, or at leaſt, politique and wiſe worldlings, (which is now adayes the condition moſt requiſite to make a Pope, who (as I ſhall moſt cleerly ſhew hereafter) hath no ſuperioritie, nor primacy over the Church, nor infallibilitie promiſed by the word and inſtitution of the Son of God, to be a competent Judge in that (as many great Biſhops and Univerſities of the Romane Church) acknowledge ſufficiently, and I my ſelfe have heard it of them, and beleeve there is no man of good underſtanding in the world, to whom this doctrine doth not ſeeme altogether extravagant and voyd of all ſenſe and reaſon; yet it is the beliefe of the Church of Rome, without which (they ſay) none can be ſaved.

For my part, I am perſwaded that whoſoever of the Romiſh Church, will conſider this point eſpecially, without paſſion and intereſt, and ſincerely ſeeke the truth, and his owne ſalvation, he cannot chooſe but yeeld as I have done, by the grace of the Father of lights, who is never deficient in neceſſitie, and from whom I confeſſe doth proceed the great gift of faith.

And if a Pagan ſhould be Judge of this controuerſie, and others, betwixt us and the Romiſh Church, I verily beleeve he would ſuddenly condemne that Church of an unjuſt uſurpation and intolerable erroûr in this point, as all the reſt (which by the grace of God we ſhall handle hereafter) and give ſentence in favour of my beliefe; which I proteſt, I have choſen, as the holieſt, pureſt, and moſt conformable to the doctrine and intentions of the Sonne of God and his Apoſtles.

Now all the queſtion and difficultie of this point, conſiſteth in the knowledge of thoſe two, which of them is the moſt certain rule and ſure Judge, moſt to be beleeved, and moſt proper for our faith, whether the Word of God, or the Pope of Rome and his traditions. The Church of Rome ſaith it is the Pope, but I hold with the Orthodox doctrine of this Kingdome of *England*, and the reformed Churches, that it is the Word of God. We ſhall ſhew hereafter, that our Saviour never gave that power and authoritie to the Pope, and therefore he cannot pretend it: but here I ſhall prove, that the holy Scripture is and ought to be the ſole rule and true Judge of our faith, grounding my ſelfe upon theſe following reaſons.

CHAP. II.

That the holy Scripture is the onely Iudge, and rule sufficient of Faith, and not the Pope, nor the Church.

THat man without question, hath a true, catholick, and perfect faith, and is in a true beliefe, who beleeveth all that Christ Jesus hath taught, and neither beleeves nor will beleeve more in the matter of faith; for the Son of God being that divine and infinite wisdome and knowledge, which came into the world to save mankinde, and teach them true faith, hath preached and taught all that was necessary to faith and salvation; so he who beleeves all that Jesus Christ hath taught, and nothing more, hath a true and perfect faith, and it is impietie to beleeve the contrary.

Now it is true that whatsoever our Saviour did preach necessary to salvation, is in the holy Scripture; and therefore the holy Scripture containes all the doctrine which is necessary to faith, and out of the written Word of God, nothing necessary to faith is to be sought.

For the Evangelists and holy Writers having undertaken by the motion and command of the holy Spirit, to write the actions and doctrine of the Son of God, for the instruction of all the faithfull that should come after; it is not credible that they should have written but a part, and omitted something that was necessary to the perfect faith, and for the instruction and forming of a true Christian; otherwise wee must say that the Gospel is not the Gospel of Jesus Christ, but onely a part of the Gospel; and the New Testament is but a part of the New Testament of the Son of God.

And note, that they were inspired and commanded by the Spirit of God, to leave to Christians and the whole Church, the life and doctrine of Jesus Christ, they being assisted and helped by his speciall grace to that end.

Moreover, they have not onely written one chapter or two, but every one of them a great number, where undoubtedly they have had space enough to comprehend all the doctrine necessary to salvation; and being foure, that which one of them might have forgot and left out, might be supplied by the other; their purpose being specially to write the doctrine and precepts of the Son

of God, which were necessary to salvation; and if there were any thing more to be beleeved than that which is in the Evangelists, we must thinke that it should be found in the Epistles either of S^t *Peter* or S^t *Paul*, or some others of the chiefe Apostles, who all (except S^t *Paul*) were witnesses of the doctrine and actions of the Son of God; or that S^t *Luke* who hath written the actions of the Apostles for many years, and many of their Sermons fully might have touched it a little. So it is voyd of all reason, to thinke that Christ Jesus did preach any other thing necessary to salvation, than that which is contained in the holy Scriptures.

And if it were not in the holy Scriptures, it would follow that the Evangelists were faultie, and blame-worthy, and their writings imperfect; for that Author is greatly to be blamed, who being expressly commanded to write of some important subject, writes many things not necessary to his purpose, and passeth by more important and principall things; Now the Evangelists having undertaken by the command and motion of the holy Spirit, to write the doctrine of faith and salvation, preached by Jesus Christ, for the instruction of the faithfull, they have written many things not absolutely necessary to salvation (as a number of Parables, Histories, and Miracles) for illustration or farther confirmation of fundamentall doctrines, and therefore wee must say that having written such things, they have not omitted more necessary and important things, otherwise they were blame-worthy, and their writings would be imperfect.

Now seeing there was but one holy Spirit that moved them, and guided their pens and their writings in this worke, one of them might have omitted something which the holy Spirit would leave and teach us by the other, or by the writings of other Apostles; but that there is any thing necessary to salvation omitted by them all, is more than can be beleeved by any Christian.

Furthermore, we see that the Evangelists and Apostles have left us sufficient instructions in their writings, to lead us to perfection, and the practice of most excellent vertues; wee must beleeve them with better reason that they have given us sufficient instructions to a perfect faith, which is the foundation of all vertue and perfection, and without which there can be no perfection nor vertue: or otherwise it behooved us to say, that they taught men to be perfect, not giving them sufficient instructions to be Christians, which should be an intolerable foppery.

Even as if a Maſon would teach his apprentiſe to build an excellent houſe, not inſtructing him how to lay the foundation, or if a Maſter would inſtruct his ſcholar to read, not teaching him to know his letters.

We muſt therefore believe that they having left us ſo noble and ſufficient inſtructions to become perfect, they have alſo left us ſufficient doctrine in their writings to obtain a perfect faith which is the neceſſary ground of all vertue and perfection; and doubtleſſe there are none but obſtinate and blinde perſons who will deny it.

2. Tim. 3. 15. Doth not Saint Paul alſo ſpeaking to *Timothy* ſay, *Thou haſt learned from thy infancy the holy Scriptures which are able to make thee wiſe unto ſalvation, through the faith which is in Chriſt Jeſus.* We muſt ſay then that the holy Scriptures being able to make him wiſe to ſalvation contain all the doctrine neceſſary to ſalvation; otherwiſe they could not make him wiſe to ſalvation (that is ſufficiently learned to be ſaved) for wiſdome to ſpeak properly is no other thing but a ſupereminent and excellent knowledge and Saint *James* ſaith, that the word of God is able to ſave us, Iam. 1. 12. If it be able to ſave us, it is ſufficient to do the ſame, and contains all that is neceſſary to ſalvation, and therefore he who believes that which is in the holy Scripture and no more, hath the perfect faith.

Yes, but (ſaith the Romiſh Church) Chriſt Jeſus remits us to the Church, for it is ſaid, *He who will not hearken to the Church let* Matth. 18. 16. *him be as a Pagan and a Publicane*, that is, an excommunicate and anathema, therefore we muſt have recourſe to the church as Judge of all controverſie, and obey its determinations.

The onely conſideration of the occaſion of this paſſage and the words themſelves may ſerve for a ſufficient anſwer: our Saviour preaching to his Diſciples and teaching them the method they ought to uſe in brotherly corrections, that it may be done according to the rules of charitie, ſpeaks to them in this manner. *If thy brother have offended againſt thee, go and reprove him, thou and he alone, if he hearken unto thee, thou haſt wonne thy brother, but if he will not heare thee, take with thee one or two more, that out of the mouth of two or three witneſſes every word may be eſtabliſhed; and if he will not heare them, tell it unto the Church, and if he refuſe to hear the Church, let him be unto thee as an heathen and a publicane.*

By which ye ſee that Jeſus Chriſt ſpeaks onely of the order which

which ought to be kept in fraternall correction, that is, we ought first to reprove in secret, next in the presence of one or two witnesses, and then in case of obstinacy declare it to the Church, and if he will not receive correction from the Church, let him be accounted as a pagan, that is, as a man without faith and religion, and as a publicane, that is, as one whom we must shun; for in those times the publicanes were odious to all the people.

But the Romish Doctors who make use of every thing to prove their doctrine, infer by those last words, that all power is given to the Church, that we must have recourse to the Church in every thing, and that all men ought to render perfect obedience to the Church in all things whatsoever; and note, that to have recourse to the Church and to obey the same, is (in the school of Rome) to have recourse to the Pope and obey him; so Pope *Innocent.* the third in the chapt. *novit. extra de Judic.* would fain vindicate to himself the cognizance of some differences betwixt *John* king of England and *Philip August* king of France, because, saith he, it is written in the Gospel *tell it to the Church*, as if by the Church the Pope onely were understood, and this interpretation is confirmed by *Bellarmine* in his book of the authority of Councells *cap.* 19. the Pope (saith he) *should tell it to the Church*, that is to say, to himself. *Innocentius cap. 3.* *Bellarm. de Concil. cap. 19.*

But the consequence is not good from a particular case to all the other, thou must have recourse for the correction and amendment of thy brother to the Church when there is no other easier way; therefore we must have recourse to it in all things, that will not follow: on the contrary he declareth that even in brotherly correction we must not have recourse thereunto, but in extremity, and also because Christ Jesus saith that in case of obstinacy and known sinne we must hear the Church, that is, receive correction and admonition from the Church, it is not meant that in vertue of those words Kings and Princes should submit themselves to the authority of the Pope in all things; and I suppose that there is none but the Pope of Rome and his adherents would draw such an unreasonable consequence, because he thinks to finde his profit therein.

CHAP. III.

That the holy Scripture is clear in that which concerns things necessary to salvation.

ONe of the greatest subtilties which the Romish Church hath found to hinder the people from reading the Scripture and to make them believe they have good reason for so doing, and perswade them that the Scripture is an unsufficient rule and Judge of our faith, is that they alleadge the holy Scriptures to be obscure and difficult to understand, and therefore christians ought not to rush in upon the reading of them in the vulgar tongue (that is to say, which they understand best) without expresse permission from the Pope, who saith he as the onely vicar of Jesus Christ in the world and infallible, hath the true understanding of the Scripture, and that we cannot admit it for Judge and rule of faith, but onely the sence and explication of the Church, that is of the Pope as I have shewed before.

And to prove that the Scripture is hard to be understood they search and pick out of purpose some obscure passages which the most learned have much adoe to understand, but which are no wayes absolutely necessary to salvation, or if they were, they are sufficiently and clearly enough explained in other places; as for example, of the first part of Psal. 16. 16. *The lines are fallen to me in pleasant places, surely I have a goodly heritage*; or this other psal. 18. 9. *There went up a smoke out of his nostrils, or fire out of his mouth devoured*; or some other prophesie, as that of Hos. 12. *Ephraim feedeth on wind and followeth after the East wind*: or Ezek. 19. 10. *Thy mother is like a vine in thy bloud planted by the waters*; with an infinite number of the like, whereof the Prophets are full which are not necessary to salvation, or if they be necessary to salvation they are sufficiently explained in other places; as that which Christ said to *Nicodemus*, *Except a man be born again, he cannot enter into the kingdome of God*, it is explained after in the fifth verse, *Except a man be born of water and of the spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdome of God*; by which it is evident, Christ Jesus would say, he who is born carnally of flesh and is not regenerated spiritually by grace and faith, cannot enter into the kingdome of God; and so of other passages, which nevertheless are very rare

Psal. 16. 16.
Psal. 18. 9.
Hos. 12. 1.
Ezek. 19. 10.
Joh. 3. 3.

in

in the new Testament in respect of that which is clear: under pretext of those passages which are nothing in comparison of the rest, they make the simpler sort believe that that the holy Scripture is so obscure and difficult, that it is a rashnesse extremely dangerous for a christian to think he can understand the meaning thereof (as a certain Dame at Court told me not long agoe not knowing me) and that no man ought to presume to read the same in a vulgar tongue without expresse license; the power whereof is reserved by the Pope alone to distribute to all christians, and cannot commonly be obtained without a great deal of money, especially for those who are remote from Rome, and that for the explanation thereof we must submit to the Church, that is, to the Pope, as I have already shewed.

So there is nothing but the explication of the Pope which can be a rule of faith, and which is infallible doctrine, and so the Pope maketh himself sole Judge of all matters of faith, to determine that which is and that which is not: is not this an intollerable extravagancy and worthy to be laught at by all men of understanding, seeing it is without warrant from Gods word, as may evidently appear.

The Pope saith then the Scriptures are very obscure and must not be holden for a rule of faith, nor be read for fear of mistaking the meaning.

It is true that the Scripture consisting of many books written by divers authours at divers times, yea and in divers ages, and for divers ends, contain great diversitie of style; for in some places it is historicall, in others propheticall, in some metaphoricall, in some morall, and in some mingled; and although all that is contained in those diversities of the holy Scriptures be written for our salvation (as saith Saint *Paul*) and we ought to make our profit thereof, nevertheless it is not to be doubted there both are and ought to be many obscure things according to the nature and qualitie of the style in which the things are written; for prophesies, parables and metaphors are ever accompanied with obscurity. Rom. 15.

But as our Saviour did make but a short speech upon earth, and having lived some 33 years preached but 3 or thereabouts, during which small time he did preach and teach clearly and soundly all things which were necessary to salvation, so that the most simple and ignorant might understand him and be sufficiently in-

structed

structed by his sermons. Neither is there any but Reprobates who will say that God being come to save mankind did not give sufficient instruction and clear enough for all men to be saved.

Otherwise how could he have condemned *Corazin* and *Bethsaida* and pronounced those words against those towns? *Woe be unto thee Corazin, woe be unto thee Bethsaida; for if the mighty works which have been done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they had repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes; But I say unto thee, that it shall be more tolerable for the land of Tyre and Sidon in the day of judgement then for thee. And thou Capernaum, if the mighty works which have been done in thee had been done in Sodom, it would have remained unto this day; But I say unto you that it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgement then for thee.* Matth. 11.20 &c. Out of all question those cities would have received clear and sufficient instructions for their salvation, otherwise he would have condemned them wrongfully. And if Christ Jesus did preach clearly all things necessary to salvation, so that those who followed him and heard him preaching might attain to perfect faith. The Evangelists having set down his life and doctrine to us, especially that which was necessary, and also endeavoured so farre as they were able to make the same known to us as clearly as our Saviour had preached it; otherwise they should be very blameworthy and we should have great reason to except against them, that our Saviour having preached a doctrine so clear, and easie to be understood of all men, they should have left it in so obscure and hard terms, that none except the learned Divines were capable to understand: what not the learned Theologians? nay none (I say) in the world except one man, to wit the Pope, were able to understand and give its true meaning and explication. No no, it is blasphemy to imagine it, but we must observe that the doctrine of the Evangelists being the same our Saviour preached, is left to us with all the facilitie and clearnesse was possible, and sufficient to instruct to true faith and salvation; neither can they be blamed of any defect, especially being directed and assisted by the holy Spirit to that end.

This impertinency also may be confuted by the onely reading of the Scriptures, and those who tax the same of obscurity, or hardnesse, do it undoubtedly out of malice or ignorance, never having read it, nor (it may be) never seen it; whereof are an infinite multitude in the Romish Church.

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Mat. 11. 25.

And be assured, that this new ignorance (besides the providing he hath ordained them) shall ever reade the holy Scripture with the spirit of simplicitie, and a mind onely bent on to seek the way and meanes of salvation; but the holy Spirit, who hath inflicted the same, will give them with a fingrall consolation and instruction, as also true knowledge of all things necessary to salvation. But if any passages follow the hard to be found, (which is very rare in the Evangelists) they may be passed over, as not absolutely necessary, or rather for greater instruction, the opinion of learned men may be sought about it: and not much marvell, if sometimes we find diversity in their collations, for being matters not absolutely necessary, concerning the effence of faith, the controversie is of such points as are of great importance, and not at all for fear of mistaking some things, is a meer invention of the Romish Church, or rather of the Bishop of Rome, who desiring to establish many articles of Faith, to maintain his authority, and the greatnesse & riches of his estate, and Clergy; and seeing nothing clear in the holy Scripture to authorize his doctrine, hath gone about to make Christians believe that the Scriptures were obscure; and that it belonges to him onely to declare their true meaning, and determine that which belongeth, or belongeth not to faith, and that they ought not so much as once presume to read them.

Further, he hath straightly forbidden them under pain of Anathema, and an eternall curse, fearing lest the people coming once to read them, should there find the condemnation of his filthy gain, and the true profanation thereof, the more Also for a dispensation, and verily I speake truth, the doctrine of the

Romish Church, giveth only so great credit and authority unto the Scripture, as it pleaseth them to allow of it, as for example, they say the Scripture is a dumb rule, and therefore insufficient to be Judge (which is a great injury done unto the word of God, and against which reason and truth doth plead) though the Kings edicts be in paper, and have no tyes, notwithstanding they have as great power amongst the good subjects, as if they were pronounced out of the Kings mouth, and that in a matter of understanding, who will affirm, that less for that, to be sufficient rules and judges for matters contained therein.

And be all unto [illegible]

When God [illegible] to have no other gods but him, not to have no strange gods before his face; is this a liuable rule? and hath it not as great power, as when God pronounced it to the Prophet Moses upon Mount Sinai? certainly it hath as much or more force, being put in writing, and signed with the Kings hand, or his Secretaries, as if it were pronounced out of his mouth: and if the King write, or pronounce it, he doth but the same act, and hath the like force.

[illegible] or rather for greater [illegible]

It is therefore wrongfully and [illegible] the word of God, as an insufficient rule or [illegible] because it is barely written, for it hath the same power and force, as if God did pronounce it every day from his mouth: and so ought to receive and respect it. Now let us see the reasons and persuasions of the Scripture, as for or not for the confirmation of [illegible] great importance.

[illegible] or rather of the Bishop of Rome, who defining or [illegible] articles of Faith, to maintain his authority, and the [illegible] riches of his clergy; and being nothing clear in the holy Scripture to [illegible] hath gone about to [illegible] that it belongs to [illegible] determine that which belongeth [illegible] that they ought not to [illegible]

Thus the holy Scripture is proved us by God, to read and meditate in the Law, and that the [illegible] diligent to read it, [illegible] understand it, in the will of God.

Further, be [illegible] under pain of [illegible] and an eternal [illegible] the people coming once to read them, should there find the condemnation of his [illegible]

A Malefactor who knoweth his fault to be condemned by the Law, apprehendeth nothing more, than that the Judge ioin his eye upon that Law, wherein he knoweth his condemnation to

to be written, as I conceive, that the Pope seeing there is nothing that condemns his doctrine so much as the holy Scripture, and the word of God, hates nothing more than that it is Scripture that is to be known and considered, above which could he, he does all he was able, and plainly has forbidden the reading thereof to the most zealous and judicious, the most learned and devout Catholics. And in the fifteenth Session of the Council of Trent, when many Canons were made concerning Books and Apocrypha Books, and many things said touching the Authority of the Books of the holy Scripture, it was at the first thought fit, and so set down, that the Scripture should be read and interpreted according to the sense which the holy Church has held and does hold, to whom it belongs to judge of the true sense and interpretation of the holy Scriptures: but this was shortly after altered, and in the room thereof was put, that the Scripture should be received according to the sense which the holy Church and the consent of the Fathers have delivered, to whom it belongs to judge of the true sense and interpretation of the holy Scriptures: which alteration was made, as I conceive, that the Pope,

if it be not (perchance) in their Brevier,

Doctors

diuers of this Prouince, and how to vnderstande, and vse
tions are giuen to all men, as well the learned as the ignorant, the
poore as the rich, while they read the vnderstanding of the Bible, or
in such things as be plaine in the same, do get such knowledge, as is
very diuers from that which is required.

Thirdly, as touching the old Testament, it may be manifestly
proued, that the Newe, which is in the bloud of Christ Iesus, our
this hath left vs all his children, by which we must inherit this
tentions, and that which he doth require of vs to do to his
children (as for example) Baptisme, and to receiue the
hath purchased for vs through his merites and bloud
Is there any man of iudgement in the World, which can
that he hath left vs his Commandements, his Will and
altogether needfull to saluation? And will suffer vs to
sayd, that there was but one path in the old
Pope) who had power to create and
Where is that so important prohibition set
so foolish? haue not we as much part
Iesus, as our Father the Pope? By what right should Christians
deprived of the reading of the will and
the will of God and his holy
to know and doe vnderstaine of eternall
power or authoritie vnder heauen, that
God enioyneth, and commandeth the
great importance to them, that no man
in the day of Iudgement? Is there any
difference then (I pray you) this prohibition is
against both reason and the will of God.

Yea, but some will say, the intention of God
and the holy Scriptures are made knowne to Christians by
mons, which they call communly the Word of God, the
preaching of the seruants of God, and Orthodox Preachers
highly to be esteemed, for by may learne and
by, but there is great difference betweene a sermon and the Word
God, because the Word of God is altogether diuine and
and the infallible truth, of which sermons and
mons of Preachers, howsoeuer they be called the Word of
are not (to speak properly) the Word of God, except
which is simply produced out of the holy Scriptures, the rest
onely humane wordes, subiect to faults and

Act. 17. 11.

Ioh. 5. 39.

Luk. 16. 28.

Apoc. 1. 3. Blessed is he that readeth, and they that heare the words of this Prophesie, and keepe and obey the things that are written therein. And

Act. 8. 27. When Philip preached of Jesus by the commandement of the Lord to goe forth, he did meet with the Eunuch of the Queene of Ethiopia, who being a man that sought the Kingdome of God did reade the old Testament: the Apostle did not reprove him for reading the Scriptures, but explained to him a Prophesie of Esaias that was difficile to be understood, and thus reading was a meanes and helpe to finde true faith, and to embrace Christian Religion. In the time then of Jesus Christ and his Apostles, the reading of the holy Scripture was not forbidden, neither was it thought to be pernicious.

The Romish Church commendeth also S. Cecile whose house they keep as a great Virgin and Martyr, for hauing continually in her bosome the Books of the Euangelists, and they hold she lived in the times of S. Clement, who is the ninth one of the first Bishops of Rome, after the death of S. Peter. The Scriptures then were not as yet prohibited, nor the reading of the same thought pernicious, or dangerous to the simple sort, for she was but a simple young damsell, brought up in Paganisme.

As we reade of S. Jerome, who lived about eight hundred years after, that he did recommend nothing to Paule and Eustochium Mother and daughter, both great Romane Dames, so much as the assiduous reading of the holy Scriptures, and that it should be the most ordinary study and frequent meditations.

By these and an infinite of other examples, which I might alledge, if I feared not tediousnesse, we see that the reading of the Scripture was permitted by, recommended and beholden in Christians, and that neither by Christ Jesus, nor his Apostles, nor the Romish Church in those times, was it thought to be pernicious.

None will say, that the Gentiles, Jewes, and Christians of those times were of greater judgement than those of our times, or that they were more capable to read the holy Scriptures, and the most difficile Prophesies, for that should be absurd.

Neither dare any one say, that the Prophets and Apostles, and Jesus Christ himselfe, or the first Pastours of those times, had not as much and more understanding, than the Popes or the Church of Rome in our time; and yet these did not forbid or dissuade, but rather commend such reading, for that should be great impiety, notwithstanding this must be the inference from such a prohibition.

But to speake truth, it appeareth to be no other thing, but a policy and malitious subtilty of the Romish Church, for the present too much corrupted, or rather from those who governe the same, for feare that the people reading the holy Scriptures, perceive the errours and falsenesse of the doctrine therein preached, seeing so little conformitie to it with the Word of God.

And truly, according to the Maxime of policy, and for the conservation and upholding of their doctrine, they have as great reason as *Mahomet* had to destroy all the Universities and Colledges of learning within the reach of his authoritie; for my part, I doe not remember to have seene any Christians, who have not in reading the holy Scriptures, fain soon to an infinite number of doubts, about the beliefe of the Romish Church, it being almost impossible to be otherwise: and as black is never better seen, than when it is brought neere to white in the light, so the lies and false doctrine being confronted and placed by the truth, cannot but appeare immediately.

And there are but few learned men, who perceive not this cleerely enough; but being interessed in that party, and being bound to it with humane cords and bands, they strive to dissemble the same, that they may conserve their goods and dignities, and by the spirit of pusillanimitie or avarice, endeavour to suffocate and tread underfoot the prickings & motions caused by the truth; but blessed are they, whom neither wealth, nor honours, nor any worldly or humane consideration, hinder to come to Christ, and who embrace his holy doctrine; and can say with S. *Paul*, Phil. 3. 8. *I account all things but losse for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ my Saviour*. Phil. 3. 8.

Since then (courteous Reader) the reading of the holy Scriptures is of such vertue, that it discovereth the lies, and is so much recommended to us by God the Father, who hath spoken to us by his Prophets and servants, and by his Sonne Jesus Christ, who hath preached it to us from his owne mouth, and by the holy Spirit, who hath charged us therewith by his Apostles and Evangelists; be in love with it, reade it againe and againe, without wearinesse. Let no power nor authoritie in the world, no prohibition of any whosoever, hinder you from the reading of it; for it being against the will and intention of God, there is no power nor authoritie in the earth can binde us from it.

On the contrary, God who commandeth it, must rather be obeyed,

beyed, than all the Popes that forbid it, although they were universall Pastours, as they falsely brag themselves to be; and undoubtedly, it is a great sin to neglect and set at naught the commandements of our God in that point, to obey mans: and therefore I exhort you againe to read the holy Scriptures courageously and often, to have them continually before your eyes, to compare the whole doctrine of our salvation with them, and hold them for a sure rule of all truth, to meditate and ruminate them unceasingly, and obey the holy Spirit, who preacheth to us therein, for I doubt not but yee may reape great profit for your soules, necessary instruction for your salvation, and a singular consolation.

And because that some one (by Gods punishment and just judgement) abusing the same, finds death in stead of life, is that a sufficient reason to deprive others thereof, & forbid the reading of it? Because the Sunne, the fire, or the water, sometimes occasions great damage to certain persons, ought the use thereof be forbidden to all men therefore as most dangerous? some there are who abuse both the Sacraments and the bounty of God, yet no man will judge them so pernicious, and of so dangerous consequence, that they ought to be abstained from; and the Popes prohibition is grounded upon a too frivolous ground and ridiculous reason, to have any weight or authority in the judgements of the wiser: Neither is there any who doe not sufficiently see it to be meerly a humane and a politique invention to conserve a false doctrine and an usurped jurisdiction, if he will but strictly remarke it, as God hath given mee grace to doe.

CHAP. V.

Of Traditions, and that they ought not to be taken for Iudge or Rule of our Faith.

THe Romish Church finding her selfe but weakly sustained by the Scriptures, and not being able to maintaine her doctrine by the written Word of God, hath bethought of an unwritten word called Tradition, making it of the same power with the holy Scriptures, and is therefore called Divine Tradition, and Apostolique, and not humane; which seemed to me a brave field to lay open all her fraudes.

Now the rule and way of the Romish Church to know and declare those Apostolique Traditions, is this; When the beginning and originall of any doctrine or Ecclesiasticall ceremony is not knowne, neither exactly by whom, or in what yeare it was instituted, since the time of Jesus Christ and his Apostles, it is holden amongst them of Divine and Apostolique Tradition. As for example, because it is not certainly knowne, who was the first that invented holy-water, and imployed it in Baptisme, and to other uses; it is esteemed to come from Christ Jesus and his Apostles, although it appeare sufficiently from the holy Scripture, that Christ and his Apostles did never use that ceremony, but onely baptized with pure and naturall water.

So because it is not knowne who it was that first did pray to the Saints, that doctrine is said to be of Apostolique and divine Tradition, and to come from Christ and his Apostles, although it appeare not in any place of Scripture, that ever any Apostle did pray to the Saints that were before them, or recommended it to us, but the contrary; and so of the rest of their Traditions.

Is not this a fine rule and pretty invention? whereon to ground an infinite number of divine and Apostolique Traditions; for, Printing not being in use but within this two or three hundred yeares, there were but few things written before that, and that seldome, to be left to posteritie, and that which was written, for the most part, dyed and vanished by the death of the Author, or shortly after, for not being transcribed: as it is with a great number of particular writings, especially if they doe not concerne temporall things.

So that in so many ages an infinite number of things, ceremonies, doctrines, and errors, have been invented in the worship of God by the superstition, vanitie, and presumption of some particular men, of which now it is impossible to know the originall and first Author; either because it was never written by any, or if it hath been written, the writings have been lost; if therefore all those things must be esteemed divine and Apostolique, out of question there will be a numberles number of divine and Apostolique Traditions. And upon these considerations, I marveled no more at the great number of Traditions, that are in the Romish Church, which I can assure you to be such, that if they were all redacted to one volume, it would assuredly be greater than all the books of the Bible; for their number is almost infinite, and not certainly known

known to this day, the number yet not being perfect; and hardly is there any generall Councells, in which some one or more new ones are not discovered.

Those of the Romish Church, who will not admit nor acknowledge the Scripture as Judge of faith, strive nevertheless to serve themselves with it the best they can, to confirme their doctrine. But (I pray you) with what reason in the point of Traditions?

To prove that the holy Scripture is not a sufficient rule of faith, and that we must have recourse to a word not written, which they call Tradition, they alledge this of S^t *Paul*, *Wherefore my Brethren, be yee stedfast and hold fast the Traditions which yee have learned either by word or by our Epistle*. Thence they inferre that S^t *Paul* had preached many things to the *Thessalonians*, which he had not written to them in his Letters, and therefore wee must beleeve more things than those which are written. 2 Thes. 2.15.

We ingeniously confesse, that the whole doctrine of salvation, and that which S^t *Paul* might have preached to the *Thessalonians*, is not in these two little Epistles; and affirme that we must beleeve more things than those which are conteined in them; but thence it will not follow, that that which S^t *Paul* had preached to the *Thessalonians*, of the necessitie of faith and salvation, is not conteined in the Old and New Testament; for there is great difference betwixt the two little Epistles to the *Thessalonians*, and all the rest of the holy Scripture; and the consequence is very bad, as every one may judge.

Besides, when S^t *Paul* saith, *Keep the Traditions*, it will no more follow, that by this word *Traditions*, an unwritten word ought necessarily to be understood; and that besides the written word of God, there is yet an unwritten word, equall in authoritie to the other; for, by the word *Tradition*, may be understood, that which is given and left either by word or writing, and not necessarily some word not written; for the holy Scripture is also a tradition, that is, a doctrine which hath been left us.

And although wee should grant, that S^t *Paul* had preached to the *Thessalonians*, many things which are not written in the holy Scriptures, and exhorted them to keepe them, it will therefore not follow, that he did exhort them to keep all those Traditions as necessary to salvation; for there are none who will not confesse that S^t *Paul* might have preached and said many things which were not absolutely necessary to salvation, nor faith, but onely convenient

ient and helpfull; as our Saviour did in his preaching; and al-
hough our Saviour should give us charge to remember them all,
nd keepe them, he doth not therefore meane that wee should be
qually obliged to keep them all, and that wee should keep them
therwise, and in another fashion, than he gave them to us, that is,
he Articles of faith, as Articles of faith, and necessary to salvation;
he Commandements as Commandements, the examples and pa-
ables, as such things; essentiall to faith, as essentiall; the ceremo-
y and things accidentall as such: and it is a very bad consequence,
rawne by the Romish Church, that because *S. Paul* exhorteth
he *Thessalonians* to keep the Traditions, he commandeth us all to
eleeve and keep them, as pertaining to faith, and of equall autho-
itie with the Scripture; a word not written, and Traditions
eerly humane, as divine Traditions, and chiefly all the Traditi-
ns of the Romish Church, which are almost without number.

And mark that in all ages this hath been the malice of here-
cks, to have recourse to Traditions, when the Scriptures faile
em: so *Tertullian* being become hereticall in his Booke *de Mo-*
gania, cap. 2. maintaineth the heresie of *Montanus*, by those
ords of our Saviour; *I have yet many things to say unto you, but*
e cannot beare them now. Which is the passage *Bellarmine* citeth
r Traditions, *cap.* 5. of his Book of the unwritten Word; and
t it appeareth by the following verse, that our Saviour by those
ings which they cannot for the present beare, meant the things
hich are to come; as the prophesies concerning the things which
ere to fall out, which are to be seen in the Epistles of the Apostles,
nd in the *Revelation* of S. *John*, and such like things, and not any
octrines of faith.

Tertull. de Monog. cap. 2. Joh. 16. 12. *Bellarm. lib.* 5. *de verbo Dei.*

Irenæus in the second chap. of his third Book, saith, that when
y did convince the hereticks with Scripture, they began to ac-
se the Scripture; saying, that the truth could not be found in
e Scripture, by those who knew not the Tradition; because it
as not given in writing, but onely spoken verbally.

Irenæus cap. 2. *lib.* 3.

Now this is practised by the Romish Church more than by any
t that hath ever yet been, because seeing Scripture doth faile her
maintaine her tyranny and innumerable superstitious policies,
e hath invented a word not written, which they call th Traditi-
ns, equalling their authoritie with the holy Scriptures; and those
raditions are invented and augmented from time to time, accor-
ng to the will and fancy of the Popes; for some of them have

invented the Masse, and some other ceremonies; and one or o
of them have now and then added to them, or taken from
mented or diminished the same; some of them have invented P
gatory, others Indulgences; some the invocation of Saints, o
the reliques; some the Communion under one kinde, and ye
this day their number is not perfect, neither is it yet known to
Romish Church, that which our Saviour preached as necessar
faith and salvation; for as there were new Articles of faith m
in the Councell of *Trent*, which was the last generall Councell
mongst them, (as that of justification and originall sin;) so
they hope to make yet more in the next Councell, as (it may be
the conception of the Virgin *Mary*, of predestination with
without merits, or some others.

Here is another objection those of the Romish Church thi
to be of great force, and which I my selfe have often used, dis
ting against those of the Romish Religion, pretending thereby
prove the necessitie of Traditions, and to referre our selves to
Church; for (say they) who gave you the holy Scripture but
Tradition? and whence know yee the Canonicall Books, fr
those that are not Canonicall, but by the determination and
dition of the Church?

It is true that every particular man receiveth the holy Scrip
from the Church he liveth in, whether it be a pure or Imp
Church; so the Apostles had received from the Priests and Scri
enemies of Jesus Christ, the books of the old Testament; but
that the Church doth onely the office of a Witnesse and not
Judge, it onely witnesseth that those Books are holy and Cano
call, but it judgeth not them to be holy, nor giveth them any
thoritie; and the Tradition of the Church, witnessing those bo
to be divine and holy, is onely a protestation of her subjection
the Scripture, and not an usurpation of her authoritie, above
written word of God. He who sheweth the King to a stranger
not therefore above the King, nor giveth he any authoritie to
King; and a Book-seller shewing to a buyer the Book of the S
tutes of the Kingdome, doth not for that authorise those Statu
and some man may receive the holy Scriptures from the Chur
and afterwards use it to condemne the same Church.

And as the testimony of innumerable eyes and eares, seeing
lightnings, and hearing the thunder, maketh us say, that it th
dreth and lighteth; so the testimony of innumerable Church
assur

suring be that the holy Scriptures are from God, ought we to give assent to them as divine.

Where it is to be noted, that as for the Books of the New Testament, we ought to take the testimony of the Churches under the New Testament, so for the Books of the old Testament, we ought to follow the judgement of the Churches of those times, and refer our selves to their testimony, without making them for that Judges of the controversie. Nor doth it appertaine to him, who is to be judged by the holy Scripture, and the word of God, to make himself Judge of that word of God; so it is a great impertinency, to inferre from this objection, the certitude of Traditions to be of the same vertue with the pure word of God.

Chapter VI.

Traditions condemned by the holy Scriptures.

WE have seen the testimonies of the holy Scripture, and the assertions they of the Romish Church bring to establish the Religion of Traditions. Now let us see the testimonies of the same Scripture, which the Orthodox and reformed Church alledge to condemne these Traditions, and consider which of them are of greatest strength. As for him having maturely considered the passages, I cannot see how their force can be eluded, or rather that they yeeld not to their clearnesse.

The Prophet *Moses* saith to the people of God, *Deut.* 12. 32. *Ye shall do that which I command you before the Lord, neither adding nor diminishing therefrom:* and more clearly in *Chap.* 12. *Ye shall adde nothing to the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish it:* and *Salomon* in his *Proverbs* saith; *Adde thou not unto his word, least he reprove thee, and thou be found a lyar.* Which being not deniable, but that it is said of the Church, what doth the Scripture thereby, but condemne most clearly the Traditions which are questionlesse new inventions added to the holy Scriptures.

Deut. 12. 13.

Pro. 30. 6.

For my part, after I began to consider attentively the words of the Apostle *S. Paul* on this subject, I could never see how the chiefe of the Romish Church, can maintaine the doctrine of their Traditions, as pertaining to faith, and equall in authority to the holy Scriptures.

Gal. 1. 8. Scriptures. Mark I pray you with me those words, *Gal.* 1. *If we our selves, or any Angel from heaven, preach to you any other Gospel than that which hath been preached unto you, let him be accursed.* Note these words, *Let him be accursed*, which are of no small importance; and observe the word *besides*, *Præter quam quod* (in the vulgar translation of S. *Jerome*) which is more fully expressed by the word *besides*, than by the word *otherwise*, as it is in some corrupted impressions; and above all note, that he saith not *otherwise*, but *besides*, *Præter quam quod*. Now what I pray you are all the traditions of the Romish Church, but doctrine and things besides the Word of God? Besides that which S. *Paul*, and Christ Jesus, and the other Apostles did preach, yea, even contrary; for all doctrine taught as necessary to faith out of the Scripture, is also contrary unto the Scripture, seeing it is against the prohibition, to adde to the Word of God; and God condemneth them who teach for doctrine of faith, the doctrine and commandements of men.

Mar. 15. 9.

And mark that Christ Jesus in this chap. of S. *Matthew*, did specially condemne the Pharisees, because they transgressed the commandements of God by their traditions: and what I pray you were those traditions? they were not things expressly forbidden by the law of God, but simple additions and willing devotions, without the word of God, and which outwardly smelled of nothing but devotion, puritie, and holinesse; as to fast three times a week, to wash the cups & the platters, to tithe Mint and Annise, to make conscience to heal any sick man on the Sabbath day, to make long prayers, to abstaine from certaine meats, and that not through a conceit that those things were polluted, but through a willing devotion and humilitie of spirit, or through a desire to mortifie the flesh; but because those things were taught as being of equall authoritie with the doctrine of faith, that is the cause wherefore they are condemned by the Son of God, as contrary to his holy Word.

There is no doubt, but by this passage of the Apostle S. *Paul* we cited before, are also condemned all the Traditions of the Romish Church, which are taught and preached to be of equall authoritie with the holy Scriptures, which truely are besides the Word of God, and the Gospel that was preached by our Saviour and his Disciples; for how cometh it to passe, that they should have preached so many things pertaining to faith and salvation? and never speak any thing of them in any of their Books, nor in the

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the Apoſtles, which is the Hiſtory of the moſt remarkable actions and Sermons of the Apoſtles, for more than twenty yeares; ſee if there be any thing ſpoken there of the invocation of Saints, of Indulgencies, Purgatory, prayer for the dead, of the Communion under one kinde, or of the reſt: and if thoſe and the like things be not in the holy Scriptures, they are beſides the Word of God, and conſequently, he that preacheth them is accurſed and Anathema, and they are not to be received as pertaining to faith.

And to ſhew that the Traditions which the Church of Rome teacheth as Articles of faith, doe not come from Chriſt Jeſus, and his Apoſtles, nor cannot be ſaid to be Apoſtolique nor divine, but papall and humane, (to ſay no worſe) there is almoſt none of them the hiſtory of that Church ſheweth not by what Pope or Biſhop they were invented, and at what time they had their beginning: ſee the Authors who handle the ſame, leaſt I ſhould be too prolix in this matter, being deſirous to lay open another of not much leſſe importance.

Bzo. Annal. Eccle. Gualter. Chronol. Durant. de ritib.

CHAP. VII.

That wee cannot ground our beliefe upon the Books of the ancient Fathers.

THoſe of the Romiſh Church to authoriſe their Traditions, which are beſides, nay contrary to the Word of God, ſend us to the Fathers, as to other Judges, to determine our differences, whoſe doctrine they affirme to be conformable to that which they teach.

Certainly, I have thought Antiquitie in it ſelfe to be very venerable and worthy to be reſpected, eſpecially the Fathers, whoſe grave and learned Books, deſerve praiſe of all good ſpirits, principally if their doctrine be conformable to the Word of God, which is the ſole infallible rule of all good doctrine.

And to ſpeak truly, I finde that the Fathers of the firſt ages condemne in a number of places ſo manifeſtly the errors and ſuperſtitious doctrines of the Romiſh Church, that I have marvailed oftentimes, how they can have the boldneſſe to alledge them in their favour. It is true, that as in the time of *S. Paul*, the myſtery of iniquitie was already working, ſo it is not to be marveiled that

they being men, some things have now and then insensibly crept into the writings of some of them, which were not altogether so pure, and seeme somewhat to incline to superstitions, which by little and little insinuated themselves into the Church.

But I believe that though all their Books should seeme manifestly to contradict the faith of the Reformed Churches, wee are not obliged to receive them as our Judges, neither as irreprochable Witnesses; and howsoever I esteeme highly of the Authours, yet wee cannot ground any Article of faith upon their Writings, but so far as wee finde them to conforme to the Word of God, which is the touchstone of all truth, neither are wee bound to have recourse to them any wayes.

For if we were obliged to have recourse to them, and receive them for Judges of our faith, that were to bring our faith and the point of our salvation in an impossibility (at least morall) because all Christians should be obliged to have them, and to have them all, or the most part, (which is not possible, but to the richer sort,) and having them they should be obliged to reade them almost all, and part wholy, to the end they might compare one with another, and see if they agree one with another in the same doctrine, and if they be conformable to themselves every where; and so none but those who had great leasure could reade them; and being almost all of them either in Latine, or Greeke, or other strange tongue, & but few of them in vulgar tongues, what should they doe who understand neither Latine nor Greeke?

There would be none then but the richer, and learneder, and those who had no other imployment but to reade, could be assured of their faith, and so all others should be without faith and knowledge of those things which concerne their salvation, and consequently, in a manifest way of perdition by their Ignorance, Notwithstanding our Saviour his coming was to teach the poore as well as the rich, the ignorant as the learned, the Merchants and Tradesmen as well as those who are not so much imployed.

Besides, it is impossible to build upon their Writings, any beliefe of faith; for, as Printing was not in their time, but onely two or three hundred yeares since, those who have written in the Primitive Church, even to our time, since our Saviour (which hath been thirteen or fourteen hundred yeares) have left us nothing but Manuscripts, which behooved us to be transcribed, that they might be dispersed. Now there is no man who will not confesse, that the

Originals

Originals and first Manuscripts written or at least revised and corrected by the Fathers which composed them, have been seen but of a few, and little or nothing of them all is to be found at this time, nor was found when Printing did begin, they being either lost or consumed by fire, or time, or by the Wormes, or a multitude of other accidents, which we see doth eat and consume the very stones and Iron.

Now those first Manuscripts have been copied out by divers Writers, and that from hand to hand, from time to time, to be dispersed and preserved from age to age, and run over Kingdoms: and after a multitude of Transcriptions, passed (by example) since our Saviours time to us, how many faults, and what alteration have been made in those Books, and in the doctrine of those Fathers? for there is no man almost how able soever, who can brag that he can transcribe a sheet of paper, without committing some one or more faults: how many will there be then in a great Volume, as one of S. *Augustins*, or S. *Chrysostoms*?

And as those Clerks or Transcribers, who were called *Amanuenses*, were for the most part mercenary, and did all for money, and profit, living by that trade; it is likely they took not much care, but thought onely upon a quick dispatch, that they might gaine the more; and when they found any thing that seemed a fault to them, whether it was really so or not, they changed and corrected it according to their minde, and passion, it faring with faults as with balls of snow, which the more they are rolled, grow the bigger; so far was their faults to be lessned by their Writers, that they were rather augmented and multiplied, the old continuing or rather growing worse, and daily more new ones being made; so that some little time after, it might be said of every Book, that it was (in a manner) no more the same Book, but altogether another, being so much changed and altered.

And the Romish Church growing in power and authoritie, when shee found any thing in those Books contrary to her doctrine, and the increase of her greatnesse, or against her designes and intentions, shee did condemne the same as falsified and falsly attributed to the Fathers, and corrected it after her own minde and fancy; and when Printing was come in use, shee made choice of that which was most conformable to her doctrine, or rather moulding and forming it by her Agents and supporters to her own minde, caused it so to be printed, suppressing and forbidding

other Copies, as ſpurious and corrupted (ſaid they) by ſome heretiques or malicious people, or falſly attributed to their Authors; and ſo who can now ſay in the world certainly, that the writings fathered upon *Irenæus*, *Cyrillus*, *Auguſtin*, and other ancient Fathers, are the true and genuine Writings of thoſe Fathers, not falſified or ſuppoſed.

And if it hath been ſo hard a matter to preſerve the holy Scripture, (which is but a little Book in compariſon of thoſe others) in its purity through ſo many ages, when Printing was not in uſe; What can we ſay of thoſe great Volumes which were not in ſo great requeſt, nor ſo much reſpected? and where the change and alteration was not of ſo great importance, to care ſo much, but where every one took often the authoritie to change, according to his fancy, and accommodate the Father to his minde, to authoriſe his beliefe.

I think there is no man of good judgement in the world, who ſeeth not cleerly the force and power of this ſo manifeſt truth, and that it is impoſſible to ground any certaine beliefe (ſuch as that of faith ought to be) upon ſo uncertaine grounds. Beſides that, though they were moſt certaine, yet being men ſubject to miſtakes and errours, wee were not obliged to make their opinions our Judges, if they be not conformable to the Word of God, which is the rule of all truth.

For which cauſe I ſhall not ſtrive in this Booke to alledge many paſſages of Fathers, but onely ſhew my opinion, grounded upon ſtrong reaſons, and upon the vertue of the Scripture; My intention not being to make a great Volume, but onely a little Booke, of ſmall coſt, and little time and paines, both for my ſelfe and the Reader.

CHAP. VIII.

Concerning the chiefe point of Controverſie, to wit, that S. Peter had no primacy in the Church, and that the primacy of the Pope is an unlawfull uſurpation.

AS I have ever beleeved, that the chiefe and moſt important point among all the controverſies betwixt the Catholique reformed

eformed and the Romish Church, is that of the Primacy of the ope, and whether he be Vicar of Christ Jesus on earth, universall nd generall Bishop over all Christians, and be head and superiour f the Catholique Church. So it was the first motive of my con- erſion, and that which I esteemed to have most need to be well onsidered and examined, as being the ground of all the Romish eliefe, which once over-turned, thee must of necessitie fall to the rotund.

And howsoever there be many other points of great impor- nce, this nevertheleſſe is as the Center, where all the rest do meet, nd the axletree on which they all move, and the foundation that oholdeth them, because that whatsoever point of faith or Scrip- ure is in controversie, those of the Romish Church will have none ut the Church for Judge, or (as I have shewed) the Pope, saying e is Vicar of Christ Jesus, and head of the universall Church, and onsequently sole Judge in matters of faith.

And being the Pope of Rome pretendeth this authoritie, onely far as he vaunteth himselfe to be successour of S. *Peter*, to whom faith that Christ Jesus hath given this power. I have diligently amined the question, to see what reason and ground the Doctors the Romish Church have to maintaine the same; and howsoe- they reject the Scripture, and will not admit it to be Judge of ntroversie; they are nevertheless necessitated to have recourse to and receive it for Judge in this point; For the question being the Pope, he must not be Judge and party, and it would be an ufferable impertinency to goe about to prove the Pope by e Pope, and maintaine that he is head of the Church, because aintaineth he and affirmeth it; he must then of necessitie declare d produce his other titles, and shew by what vertue he posſeſ- h this authoritie; there being no proscription in matter of faith d conscience; for otherwise the Religion of the Gentiles and olaters, would have been thought the best, and the doctrine the Evangelists would never have been planted; for which use also he laboureth to prove this his Article by the Scrip- re.

And to that end we shall first set downe the strongest of his rea- ns, by way of objection; the weaknesse and nullity of which, I all shew: And although it be sufficient enough for evidencing s power to be unlawfull, and usurped, making it appeare that his tles are false, and of no force, and that wee are not obliged to

bring proofes out of the Scriptures, for that which is a point of our faith, it being sufficient for us, that it is not in the Scripture which we hold for sole rule and Judge.

As for example, to prove that the *Metamorphosis* of *Ovid*, is no an Article of faith, we are not bound to produce a formall and cleare passage, that *Metamorphosis* of *Ovid* is not a point of faith: or the Fables of *Esop* appertaine not to faith; but it is sufficient that neither the one nor the other is to be found in Scripture: and so to shew that the primacy of the Pope, and of S. *Peter* over the whole Church, and over all Christians, is not a point of faith: it sufficeth that it cannot be proved nor shewed out of the holy Scripture, and that all the passages they bring, are insufficient to prove it.

Nevertheless, we shall deale favourably with our Adversaries in this point, and shew the negative out of the Scripture, and demonstrate also from thence (by the grace of God) that our Saviour had never any intention to make S. *Peter* head of the Church, nor leave any Vicar nor successour in his place; and that the Apostles did never beleeve nor thinke it, nor the ancient Primitive Church ever held the Pope of Rome for universall Bishop & generall head of the Church; and I perswade my selfe, if one will compare with a judgement void of passion, the reasons which prove this negative with those the Romish Church bring to prove the affirmative, he will questionlesse judge the first a great deale clearer, and stronger than those of the Romish Church.

It were a thing too tedious, both for the Reader, and for the intention of my shortnesse here to set downe all the passages of the holy Scripture they of the Romish Church produce to prove this: but I take God to witnesse, I shall produce all the strongest reasons they use, as I promise sincerely and truely in all other points I doe.

Mat. 16. 17. The first objection I shall produce is this, drawn out of *Matthew*. *Jesus came* (saith he) *into the coasts of Cesarea Philippi, and asked his Disciples, saying, whom doe men say that I the Son of man am? and they said, some say thou art John the Baptist, some Elias, and others Jeremias, or one of the Prophets; he saith unto them, but whom say ye that I am, and Simon Peter answered, saying, thou art Christ the Son of the living God; and Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou Simon Barjona, for flesh and bloud hath not revealed this unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven; and I say unto thee, that thou*

Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevaile against it. This is the passage that they esteeme of the greatest force and strength to prove the primacy of S. *Peter*, and of the Pope; as also the infallibilitie of his doctrine; his primacy by those words, *and upon this rock I will build my Church*; and his infallibilitie by the words following, *and the gates of hell shall not prevaile against it.* Which we shall also by Gods grace examine hereafter, and for the solution of the first point.

We answer first that Christ Jesus by those words, *And upon this rock, &c.* meanes not to speak of the person of S. *Peter*, but of the confession of S. *Peter*, which he had done so worthily, in saying that he was the *Christ*, the *Son of the living God*; as doth clearly appeare by the ensuing words; *And the gates of hell shall not prevaile against it*: for if this was understood of the person of S. *Peter*, who should be called a *Rock*, *Petra*, those following words would not be found to be true, seeing since Christ Jesus had said this, the gates of hell did prevaile against *Peter*, for he denied and offended his Master, yeelding to the temptation of Sathan; but Christ hearing the true and faithfull beleefe of S. *Peter*, said to him, that he was called *Rock*, and making an allusion to the word *Peter*, said to him, that upon his confession, which was a most sure rock, he would build his Church, and the gates of hell should never prevaile against it; (the truth of the Son of God being eternally to endure and triumph over the power of hell;) I am assured this exposition will seeme best and most reasonable to all men of good understanding; and it is confirmed by a great number of ancient Authors; for so doth S. *Chrysostome* understand it in his 55. Homily on the 16. of *Matt.* upon this Rock, that is (saith he) upon the faith of his confession. And in his Sermon of the *Pentecost*, he saith upon this rock, and not upon *Peter*, for he hath not founded his Church upon men, but upon the faith. And S. *Augustin* in his tenth Treatise on S. *John*, what meaneth that, *upon this rock I will build my Church*, upon this faith, upon that which was said, *Thou art the Christ the Son of the living God.*

Chrysost. Hom. 55. in 16. Matth.

Id. Serm. sup. Pent.

Aug. tract. 10. in Ioan.

We answer, secondly, that although we should grant that our Saviour had founded his Church upon S. *Peter*, and that S. *Peter* was the foundation of the Church, it would not follow thence that he was head and superiour; for there is great difference betwixt the foundation and top of an house, betwixt the feet which are as the basis and foundation of the body, and the head that is above

and

and governeth all the reſt; not becauſe S. *Peter* was called the foundation of the Church, can any pretend therefore that he ſhould be the head and governour? for the Apoſtles and Prophets are alſo called the foundation of the Church, and of the Saints.

Eph. 2. 20. *Now therefore ye are no more ſtrangers and forreiners, but fellow Citizens with the Saints and houſhold of God, and are built upon the foundation of the Apoſtles and Prophets, Jeſus Chriſt himſelfe being the chiefe corner ſtone*; that is to ſay, that the Apoſtles and Prophets have planted the Church, and laid the firſt foundation by their doctrine and by their faith (which is the ſame truth;) nevertheleſſe, none of the Prophets or other Apoſtles have been thereforeeſteemed to have had an univerſall ſupremacy over the whole Church; and whereof they be called the foundations, it is not meant of the perſons, but of their doctrine and faith; for certainly the Church was never founded upon mortall men; it was before S. *Peter* and the Apoſtles, and did not change its foundation at the coming of S. *Peter* or the other Apoſtles: And if it had been founded upon their perſons, S. *Peter* and the Apoſtles being dead the foundation of the Church behoved to have changed, and that much to the worſe, there never having been any equall to them ſince; and wee are not grounded upon another foundation, than that whereon S. *Peter* was grounded; now he was not founded upon himſelfe but on Chriſt Jeſus, who not onely in his doctrine but alſo in his proper perſon is the fundamentall and head-ſtone of the corner.

The ſecond Objection of the Papiſts which I ſhall produce for proofe of S. *Peters* primacy, ſhall be drawne from the following

Mat. 16. 14. words, ſet downe in *Mat.* 16. 14. *And I will give thee the keyes of the Kingdome of Heaven, and whatſoever thou ſhalt binde on earth, ſhall be bound in Heaven, and whatſoever thou ſhalt looſe on earth, ſhall be looſed in Heaven*; The Popes grounding themſelves on thoſe words, have aſſumed all power over Chriſtians, over Kings, Emperours, and States, to excommunicate, interdict and depoſe, to crowne and create Princes, and to give all their eſtates in ſpoyle. In a word, they thinke all they are able to attempt, is lawfull to them, as being ſufficiently authoriſed by thoſe words, and that no thing under the heavens is exempt from their juriſdiction, becauſe it is ſaid in that paſſage, *Whatſoever thou ſhalt binde on earth, ſhall be bound in heaven*. At the firſt ſight this paſſage wee have cited ſeemeth to be of great ſtrength, to maintaine the primacy of S.

Peter

Peter, and his successours, but I will onely turne over the leafe, to elude this objection, and shew its weaknesse and insufficiency for this purpose; for I finde in *Mat.* 18. 18. that Christ said to all his Disciples and Apostles present, the same words in the plurall number, *Verily, I say unto you, that whatsoever yee shall binde on earth, shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever yee shall loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven. Quecunque ligaveritis* in the plurall number, nevertheless, I have never as yet heard nor seen any Author that attributeth this generall and universall power over the whole Church, and over all Christians, to any other of the Apostles, by those words; why then to S. *Peter* more than the rest? seeing the same words were spoken to them by Christ. This might be a sufficient Answer to the objection of the Romish Church. Mat. 18. 18.

But because they use these words yet further to give power to all their Priests to absolve from all sinnes, even the most secret, and to binde and loose the soules and consciences at their pleasure, I intreat you seriously to consider the occasion of this passage, to see how little reason they have, or rather the great wrong they doe in establishing a doctrine of so great importance on these words; for these are the words the Bishops use at the consecration of Priests, imposing their hands, and saying, *Receive the holy Spirit, all that yee binde on earth, shall be bound in heaven, and all that yee loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.*

Jesus preaching to his Disciples of the order that ought to be kept in brotherly correction, saith *Mat.* 18. 16. *If thy brother trespasse against thee, goe and tell him his fault betwixt him and thee alone, if he shall heare thee, thou hast gained thy brother; but if he will not heare thee, take with thee two or three more, that out of the mouth of two or three Witnesses, every word shall be established; and if he shall neglect to heare them, tell it unto the Church; but if he neglect to heare the Church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican; verily I say unto you, that whatsoever yee binde on earth, shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever yee shall loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven.* Thence every man may cleerly see that our Saviour speaks of the exterior and publique sinnes of our neighbour, which are known; not of secret sinnes, and to keep the order of charitie and not dishonour him, his will is, that when thou shalt know a thou reprove him secretly between thee and him alone; but if he continue still, take with thee two or three Witnesses to reprove him in their presence, and if for all that he continue in his sin and obsti- Mat. 18. 16.

nacy, accuse him to the Congregation and company of the faithfull, that he may receive correction; and if he doth not humble and submit himselfe, let him be excommunicate and thrust out of the Congregation; and thereupon he affureth the Pastours of his Church, in the person of his Disciples, that whatsoever they shall binde or loose on earth (being understood with this order of charitie) shall be bound or looſed in heaven; that is, whomsoever they shall bind with the bands and sentence of excommunication, shall be bound in heaven, and the sentence shall be confirmed and ratified in heaven by God; and he whom they shall thrust out of the Church and Congregation, shall be esteemed of us as thrust out in heaven.

Is there any man in the world that can justly contradict the literall sence of these words? and who seeth not that this hath been out of all doubt the true meaning of the Son of God? To what purpose then doe they apply that which was spoken of a particular case, and of exteriour and knowne sinnes, to all the interiour hidden and secret sinnes of the heart? and to what end doe they enlarge the power of the Minister (which is limited in this case) over all manner of persons, subjects, and States? but the ambition to command maketh arrogant men rather Chaunels of all wood to defile it selfe and all its followers.

See here another objection of the same mettle with the former. Our Saviour *Joh.* 21. 15. saith to S. *Peter* twice; *feed my Lambes*, and once *feed my sheepe*, and by consequence, he hath established him universall Pastour over all Christians. Joh. 21. 15.

I marvell much that the Doctors of the Romish Church should take pleasure to forge such bad consequences; for I believe they know well enough, that *Terminus indefinitus æquivalet particulari non universali*, that an indefinite proposition is equivalent to a particular, and not to an universall or generall: Wee might say, that Christ in those words did not recommend all his sheep to *Peter*, nor give him power over them all; and let us grant notwithstanding, that S. *Peter* had charge to feed all the sheep and lambs of the Lords flocke, and commission to preach the Gospell unto them, and feed them with the doctrine of life and salvation. The same Commission and power was also given by Jesus Christ to all the Apostles, when he said to them in *Mark.* 16. 15. *Goe yee to all the world, and Preach the Gospell to every creature*; and *Mat.* 28. 19. *Goe and teach all Nations*; for so ought the word *feed* to be understood, Mark. 16. 15. Mat. 28. 19.

derstood, namely, to feed with doctrine and to teach; for it is not said that primacy and superioritie is attributed to them, but onely a Commission and charge given to preach the Gospel every where, and teach all men to beleeve.

Further, I answer, that although this passage were understood of the power and authoritie (it being an indefinite proposition) to wit, my sheep, all the sheep cannot be understood here, but onely those which Christ would especially commite to his guard, and put under his government, to wit, the Churches which he was to found and governe.

A King sending a Nobleman to be Governour of a Province, or Citie, if perchance he say unto him, goe and governe my subjects well; what foole is there in the world will beleeve, that by these words the King giveth him an ample & unlimited power over all his Kingdome & subjects, and createth him thereby his successour in all his estates after his death; would not he be thought to be hippocondriacally affected, who would make himselfe beleeve it? the King understandeth doubtlesse thereby his people and subjects which are in the Province and place where he is sent as Governour, and not those who are in other places.

If a Bishop send a Priest to governe a Parish of a Church, and say to him, goe I recommend my people and my sheep unto you, teach them well, and instruct them faithfully, take great care to feed my flock with good doctrine; ought this Priest therefore to imagine with himselfe, that all the people in his diocesse are subject to him? and that the Bishop giveth him ample power over all his Bishoprick, and maketh him his successour by those words? Let him perswade himselfe as much as he can, as doe the *Hypocondriaques*; but I beleeve he should finde some to speake with all, if he would undertake the exercise of such authoritie without some other Commission; for by that he is sufficient he beleeves, that the Bishop recommendeth to his charge the sheep which he hath commited to his guard and leading.

So it is without sence and reason they imagine to inferre by those words, that Christ hath given all power over the Church to S. *Peter*, and established him his Vicar and successour in his place, but onely he commandeth him to preach and declare the Gospel every where, as he did in other places to all the other Apostles, without distinction of Jewes or Gentiles, Countreyes or Estates, but generally in every place where they should be sent. And after this

this manner doth the Romish Church use the holy Scripture, to prove the Articles of their beliefe.

Another objection of the Church of Rome is. Our Saviour Mat. 17. 27. cōmanded *S. Peter*, Mat. 17. 27. To take the first fish he could catch, and take a piece of money out of its mouth, and pay the tribute for them two: therefore he made him his successour after his death, and hath given him the Primacy over the whole Church, and over the other Apostles. See here the meaning of this history: some Collectour or Publicane cometh to S. *Peter*, who was with our Saviour, as the first he found (it may be) or perhaps the most ancient and considerable of all, and said unto him that their Master did pay no tribute to the Prince. S. *Peter* telleth it to Christ, who commandeth him to go to the sea, and the first fish he could catch, to take a piece of money which he should find in his mouth, and pay for him and himself to the publicane, to eschew scandalls: hereby is appeareth that he maketh him his successour, and vicar after his death, and that he hath the Primacy and superiority over all the other Apostles and Christians.

Is not this a consequence handsomely deduced by wise men? and nevertheless it is one of the Romish Church. The publicane and collectour (for the Prince) coming at a double quill to ask of him some subsidy and tribute, they addressed themselves to the first they met with all, or to some old servant, and tell him that his Master hath not paid the subsidies, the servant goeth and telleth it to his Master, who commandeth him to go to such a place, and take money to pay for him and himself, which he doth to shunne noise and scandall. This servitour ought he here for to presume with himself, that he will succeed to all the goods and estate of his Master, and that thereby preheminence is given unto him over all his other companions, and fellow-servants, and should he not shew himself altogether ridiculous, who would maintain the same to draw such consequences? and to found one Article of faith and the most important of them all, upon so frivolous conjectures and weak proofs, it is to make fools of men: there must be other proofs, and more authentique and clearer declarations, to pretend lawfully the greatest power and most advantagious succession in the world.

Take here yet another patrell of the same dough, or rather more frivolous. S. *Peter* (say they) was the first who was called to the Apostleship, therefore Christ made him his Successour, and

Vicar;

Vicar; & gave him not for his death the superiority over his fellows, and the whole Church?

S. *John* saith, that *Andrew* having found Jesus Christ, went and told his brother *Simon*, and brought him to Christ, so that by that means *Andrew* should be the first of the Apostles, who found the Messiah, and led him Christ: but put the case it were *Peter*, and that he was the first chosen of the Apostles, and called to the Apostleship; will it follow thence that Christ Jesus made him his Successour? Joh. 1. 41.

The first souldier that is inrolled in a Company by his Captain, is he for that his Successour after his death; must he have the superiority after his Captains death over all the rest; without other declaration or title at all? especially the Captain having never declared any thing that way, but provided other waies for the government and leading of his company: there is certainly neither rhyme nor reason for deducing such consequences; so all this serveth onely to deceive the simple and weaker spirits; but every man of judgement, seeth well enough their weaknesse, to believe or give credit thereto.

Now I protest, they are the strongest arguments the Romish Church produceth out of the holy Scripture, to prove the primacy of S. *Peter*, and consequently that of the Pope; for there is nothing spoken of the Pope in the holy Scripture, nor doth he pretend any right thereto, but so farre as he termeth himself the Successour of S. *Peter*; and if they be attentively considered as they ought, I perswade my self there is no man in the world, provided he hath any sparke of common reason, who will not judge them too small and weak to prove so important a doctrine, which is the foundation of all the Romish belief, and this certainly is more then sufficient to shew that the power of the Pope is usurped, that he hath not the authority he pretendeth over the Church, and that wrongfully he calleth himself the universall Pastour over all Christians, and Vicar of Jesus Christ on earth, he not being able to shew or prove his succession and power by any passage of Scripture, which hath any strength or likelihood.

But I made not to stay there, (not for any obligation) but for greater satisfaction of those who are desirous of salvation and the truth, I will prove the negative by Scripture, and thereby shew that our Saviour had never intention to leave S. *Peter*, nor any other Successour or Vicar in his place, and that the Apostles never

acknowledged S. Peter, nor any other for universall Pastour, but Christ; we shall also see hereafter how the Pope of Rome was above three or foure hundred yeares without being acknowledged for generall Bishop, and universall Pastour of the Church, which next we shall shew how this usurpation was brought into the world, and how it hath been maintained in such an ambitious greatnesse.

CHAP. IX.

Proved from holy Scripture, that Christ had never intention to leave S. Peter or any other Apostle for his Successour, or generall Vicar after him.

ALthough it be sufficient to prove the usurpation of any authoritie, that no authentique nor credible titles can be produced; so to prove the authority the Pope pretends to over the Church to be usurped, it is sufficient that he cannot produce any passage of Scripture, which sheweth with any apparancy that that authority was given him by Jesus Christ.

Nevertheless, I shall shew the contrary out of the holy Scripture, and evidence clearely by the same, that it was never the intention of Christ Jesus, to leave S. *Peter* nor any other of the Apostles as generall Vicar in his place, or superiour over the whole Church, assuring the Reader, that if he will be but an indifferent judge in this point, and examine this with sincerity and without passion, he shall finde my reasons stronger for the negative which none is obliged to prove, than those of the Romish Church for the affirmative of the most important article of their beliefe.

Our Saviour (saith S. *Luke*) being neere the time of his suffering, did advertise his Disciples of his death, telling them that the *Son of man should be delivered into the hands of men, and that they should slay him, and put him to death, and that he would rise againe the third day after his death.* Luk. 9. 49. Mark. 9. 33. They understood not (as the Evangelist saith) these words, and that mystery; nevertheless, hearing him speak of his death, they dreamed of a succession and primacy after his death, and fell into dispute among themselves, who should be the greatest among them, and who should command after his death.

If Christ Jesus had had any desire to leave any Successour after his death for universall head over them all, and the whole Church, that was a very fit occasion to declare his will. None dare say, that he forgot himselfe, for the Disciples gave him sufficient occasion to thinke of it. Moreover, he being the eternall Wisdome, he did remember all things he had to doe; neither was there ever in him defect of remembrance or memory. S. Peter was present with the others, if he had a desire to leave a Successour, there is no man in the world who will not thinke that this was a fairr occasion to declare himselfe there at[illegible], his death being neere; or then take some other time to leave a successour to them, and nevertheless, he never spake so much as one word, neither at that time nor any other, onely he reproved and checked greatly their ambition in that; and setting a little childe in the middest of them, exhorted them all to submission, and to the contempt of domination, & to imitate the humble thoughts of that little childe, which were cleane farre from ambition.

And observe that they did even dispute of that primacy after our Saviour had said to S. Peter; *Thou art Peter, and upon this rock, &c.* and the other words which the Romish Church bring for the primacy of S. Peter; and if they understood those words in the Romish Church saith they must be understood, how commeth it to passe, that they disputed yet still among themselves for the primacy? Was not that to oppose themselves to the Lords command? And Christ saith not unto them, why dispute you for the primacy? doe you not well remember, that I have already given the superiorite to Peter? if it was given (as they pretend) this was the answer he behoved to make, but he exhorteth them only to humilitie, and to the contempt of all primacy. And as they disputed yet another time the night before his death, he said to them, *The Kings of the Nations exercise Lordship over them, but it shall not be so amongst you.* Mat. 16. 13. Luk. 22. 26.

Now seeing Christ hath not left a Successour, neither at that time, nor at any other, it is an evident signe that he would not, that it was never his intention, and that is it to conjecture without reason to thinke the contrary.

Further our Saviour being neere to his death, two or three houres before he was taken, he desired (being with all his Disciples together) to eat with them, and celebrate the Passover; after Supper he riseth from the Table, and laying aside his garment, girdeth Joh. 13. 4.

himselfe

himself with a linnen cloath, powreth water into the Bason himselfe, and washeth the feet of his Apostles, beginning (it is true) at S. *Peter*, (it may be) as one of the ancientest, and being of a lively spirit and a bold, he was questionlesse one of the most considerable amongst them: nor must we marvell, if our Saviour spoke often to him, and that S. *Peter* speaketh sometimes for all the rest, not by office nor dignitie, but (possibly) through confidence of facilitie in discoursing; (but this by the way:) he doth the same to the other Apostles, and washeth their feet; he resumeth his garments, and sitteth down to the Table againe, and beginneth a long exhortation to them, as being the last of all, both to bid them farewell, and declare to them his last Will. It is (out of all doubt) at this time that he should speak to them of a Successour, if he have any intention to leave one after him; he exhorteth them by his owne example to humilitie, to puritie and patience, to charitie and to love one another; he speaketh to them of his deitie, and of eternall life, of the persecutions and tortures which he and they were to suffer. In a word, he telleth them a number of things, which may be seen at large in S. *Joh.* chap. 13. but he speaketh not one word to them of a Successour, nor of leaving a Vicar in his place, or an universall head after his death. And is it not a most evident signe, if he have not done it, that he would not doe it? for that was his last exhortation before his death, knowing that they should not conveene, nor he see them any more together, to speake to them.

Ioh. 13.

He speaketh indeed of *Peter* and to him when he spoke of his inconstancy, that he should deny him three times; but he speaketh never a word to him of primacy, or leaving him as his Vicar on earth; he saith often that he is to depart from them, and promiseth he will not leave them Orphans, but that he will send them the holy Spirit to abide eternally with them, to comfort them and teach them in all truth; but he saith not to them, that he will leave them another Master in his place, a generall Vicar or Head and Superiour, whom they must obey after him. There are none who will not judge, that if he had intention to doe it, it should especially have been at this time, and occasion; and if he hath not done it here, or elsewhere, it is a manifest like and certaine proofe that he will have no other Superiour over his Church but himself and the holy Spirit; and he saith that he would remaine and stay with them always, even to the end of the world.

Mat. 28. 20.

Besides

Besides, our Saviour being upon the Crosse, recommendeth his Mother to *S. Iohn*, and *S. Iohn* to his Mother: if *S. Peter* should have been his Successour and Vicar after his death, he might even then have spoken something, but neither did he it there, nor before, nor after he was risen, although he was conversant amongst them, and with his Disciples oftentimes, for the space of fortie dayes: is not this then a most manifest and cleere proofe, that he would leave neither Successour nor generall Vicar in his roome? and that it is without sence or reason to say he left *S. Peter*. If the testimony of all the men in the world should be found to contradict this same, would it be of greater force and strength than this? The Word of God ought to triumph over all, neither should any thing be opposed to it, and it is blasphemy to attempt it: there needeth no glosses here, for this is cleere enough; but either must a man renounce all that is in the holy Scripture, or acknowledge this doctrine and truth, nor could ever I conclude otherwise, having considered it.

Here you may see (good Reader) by the holy Scripture, that Jesus Christ had never intention to leave any man for Successour and universall Vicar or generall head in his place; and that he himself alone would be governour and director for ever, and none other but himself. Therefore it is wrongfully that the Pope of Rome groundeth and maintaineth his authoritie upon that. Now let us see by the holy Scripture, that the Apostles did never hold *Peter* for his Successour or universall head of the Church.

CHAP. X.

Proved by the holy Scripture, that the Apostles did never acknowledge S. Peter for superiour, and universall head of the Church.

IF *S. Peter* hath been instituted by Christ generall Pastour of the Church, and Superiour over all the Apostles, and Christians, I undoubtedly believe that the other Apostles did know it perfectly; for although Christ should never have declared any thing to them, yet the holy Spirit, who instructed them in all truth, would have taught them this so important a point. So it is that it may be proved, even by the Scripture it selfe, that the Apostles did ne-

yet acknowledge this superiority and primacy in Peter; and therefore we may safely conclude, that he never had it.

Finde in the Acts of the Apostles, chap. 15. 7. that the first Councell of the Church after the death of our Saviour was holden at Jerusalem, where S. James was Bishop and not S. Peter, that Paul and Barnabas and others came expressly thither to the Apostles and Elders did assemble to confer about something touching Circumcision, and after great debate, Peter (saith Luke) rose up and spake, and after him Paul and Barnabas declaring what signes and wonders God had done by them among the Gentiles, and so finde as they had done, S. James answered, saying, Men and brethren, hearken unto me; Simon hath declared how God, &c. to whom the sentence is, that we trouble not them, which among the Gentiles are turned to God, but that we write unto them, &c.

Now Judge (I pray you) by this passage, if Peter may be thought chiefe in this so noble and famous Councell, or rather if the eldest of the Apostles, who may be thought superiour to this assembly, it is queſtionleſſe S. James, the Councell holding in his Citie and Church. It is true, S. Peter (we doubt after some disputation, as is pretended, for they had already discoursed and spoken, but S. James pronounceth sentence in the assembly and as Judge and as of most authoritie in the Councell, it being done in his Diocese) he imposeth silence to Peter and prepoſeth the sentence, as the custome of the Judges, and saith, Wherefore my sentence is, &c. as Judge, Ego autem judico, as S. Jerome translateth both which queſtionleſſe he did, not as superiour to all, but as Bishop of the place where the assembly was holden, and to whom for that respect, the first place and greatest authoritie was due; as there is no Bishop in the world, that giveth not place to another in his owne Church, and within the bounds of his Jurisdiction.

But if Peter had had the primacy, he would have pronounced the sentence as Judge and as Master and Superiour over them all, and it was his to say, Ego judico: I marvell also that S. James speaking to him (if he thought him Vicar of Christ) said not O Master Simon, or the universall Vicar and Pastour, or gave him not some great title, such as is now given to the Popes, as calling him great over-sight to omit, but title such as (Simon hath declared) if Simon was his superiour and universall head of the Church. James was greatly to be blamed in this point, for some irreverence or little respect; but knowing himselfe and but equall to them

them, he doth him as his equall, keeping onely the authority and dignity of his own See.

It is said in the Acts chap. 11. that S. Peter having converted and baptized Cornelius the Centurion, and all those men who were Gentiles, he came up again to Jerusalem, and being there that they of the Circumcision (that is, the converted Jewes) would have reproved him, and contended with him, saying, Why wentest thou in to men uncircumcised, and didst eat with them? Peter beginneth and declareth all the matter unto them in order, and justifieth the action; if S. Peter was head of the Church, and generall Pastour of all Christians, and of all the world, I marvell first how they had the boldnesse to reprove him for preaching to the Gentiles, whose Pastour he was as well as of the Jewes; and I admire also that S. Peter seemeth to excuse himselfe before them upon a particular revelation and commission, and did not rather tell them, that being universall Pastour, he had power over all soules, and it belonged to him to preach the Gospell to every creature, not onely to the Jewes but also to the Gentiles: certainly he did not acknowledge as yet that generall power and universall primacy in himselfe, nor yet did Christians acknowledge it in him; for out of all question they would have spoken otherwise to him, and he would also have answered in other manner, especially if he had thought it to have had that infallibilitie which the Pope of Rome vindicateth to himselfe; which he saith he hath gotten by the succession, and in the person of S. Peter.

Moreover, the Apostles sent Peter and John to preach in Samaria; would the Pope now adayes receive any such commission, and goe preach to the Indians, or in Russia, by Commission from some other Bishops in France or Italy?

Further, S. Paul saith, that the preaching of the Gospel of the Uncircumcision was committed to him, as that of the Circumcision to S. Peter; and when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace (saith he) that was given unto mee (they gave to me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship) that is, they received me for companion, that we should goe unto the heathen, and they unto the Circumcision.

Here (if you please) you may observe that he attributeth no more to Peter, than to John and James, but calleth them all three, Pillars, and nameth not Peter but James first; which shewed that he acknowledged no superiorities amongst them above the rest.

Acts 8.

Gal. 2. 16.

and saith further, that the right hand of allociation was given him (that is, they received him for companion) to goe and preach to the Gentiles as they to the Jewes. Is there any Bishop in the world who dare write himselfe companion to the Pope? and the charge to preach to the Gentiles, was it not the most honourable and greatest and most fit to the universall Pastour of the world? which if S. Peter had been, it was to him rather than to S. Paul, to whom it did belong; it being also said, that he hath been Bishop of the chiefe Citie of all the Gentiles, although there be no precise nor likelihood of it he in the Scripture; but of this hereafter.

Gal. 2. 11. And a little after in the same chap. *When Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed*; for before that certaine came from *James*, he did eat with the Gentiles, but when they were come, he withdrew and separated himselfe, fearing them which were of the Circumcision; and the other Jewes dissembled likewise with him, in so much that *Barnabas* also was carried away with their dissimulation. *But when I saw that they walked not uprightly, according to the truth of the Gospel, I said unto Peter before them all, if thou being a Jew, livest also after the manner of the Gentiles, and not as do the Jewes, why compellest thou the Gentiles to live as the Jewes?*

Here you see how *Paul* saith that he withstood *Peter* to his face, because he was to be blamed, yea and reproved him sharply for his dissimulation and evill example; if *Paul* had acknowledged *Peter* for his superiour and head over all Christians, it is out of all doubt a great fault in *Paul* to resist his superiour to his face, and to write; and if he did acknowledge in him that infallibilitie whereof the Pope braggeth, how saith he, that he was to be blamed and faulty? there can be no other thing answered to this, but that *Paul* did not acknowledge any superioritie or infallibilitie in Saint *Peter*; otherwise there is none of good judgement in the world, who would not think *Paul* guilty of a fault and crime of contempt: and yet no man, even to this day, nor any Pope durst ever condemne this fault in *Paul*; and did also he onely acknowledge *Peter* as his equall and fellow-Apostle, whom he was bold to reprove, and I believe that every man who is not interessed, and is void of passion, will judge with me by those passages of Scripture, and with the orthodox belief, that the Apostles did never acknowledge this superiority and Primacy in *Peter*, and that is is in vain to the Pope to vindicate the same to himself.

Finally, if Saint *Peter* had had the Primacy, and the full authority over all the Apostles, and all Christians, and all the Churches of the world, I marvell he never made it appear, nor used it at any time, and that there is nothing spoken of it in the Acts of the Apostles, which are the history of the Apostles for more then 20 years. I marvell also that he did not addresse some Epistles to all the Christians in the world, but contented himself to write onely to some Jewes who were dispersed by the persecution of Saint *Stephen*; and I marvell yet more of all, he did not put some titles before his Epistles, to shew his Primacy; he doth not write *Peter* Bishop of Bishops, or universall Pastour of the Church, or great Vicar of Christ on earth, nor any such thing, but onely *Peter an Apostle of Jesus Christ, to the strangers elect are scattered in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bythinia*, and so much in one word in both these Epistles that favours of this Supremacy, which I speak not the words of a Master, nor of a Superiour or Soveraign: so the Soveraign over all ought to leave to his subjects and vassals the name of Soveraign, how humble soever he be without using any word of Lord and Master, or giving any command or authority. It appeared then lively by that which we spoke before, that the Apostles did never acknowledge this Primacy of Saint *Peter*, nor did he ever acknowledge it in himself, and I believe I have sufficiently proved that by Scripture, to be judged by any kind of judgement that those arguments of Scripture do prove this negative, (to wit that Saint *Peter* had no Primacy) are beyond all comparison stronger then those which the Romish Church doth produce to prove the affirmative of this Doctrine, to wit, that Saint *Peter* was Head of the Church.

1. Pet. 1.

I know that the Doctours of the Romish Church want not explications in their favour upon those passages. Whether sound or by them, or some of the ancients, fair there is no error that may not finde some colourable pretext; but we shall give sufficient answers thereto in the next chapter; and I protest I never could finde satisfaction upon I believe shall any man of sound judgement finde satisfaction therein; for this truth is too clear and evident to be contradicted.

Now let us see if the Bishop of Rome, who calleth himself Successour of Saint *Peter*, was acknowledged by the primitive

Church, and those first ages to have had this Primacy, and the

A. Pet. 2.

THE first question to be handled here, should be whether Saint *Peter* were ever Bishop of Rome, or if he ever was at Rome: for the Pope of Rome pretendeth only his Primacy by succeeding Saint *Peter* in the See of Rome, to which Saint Peter was ordained the general head and universall power over all Christian nations. If any truth may be drawn from the Scripture to this point, it is out of all doubt more probable, and more certain, that he was never Bishop, nay that he was never there, than the other: for it was a strange and hard thing to believe, that he should have founded that Church, established his See, and left which the Pope claimeth the full in the world, and yet nothing so much as once mentioned in the holy Scripture, as well as that of *Antioch*, where *Peter* is said to have been, nor did *Paul* bring Rome ever speak of *Peter*, who should also have been there to be so long he was: and when soon after he writeth to the Romans, of the chief and high dignity (as writers report) of Saint *Peter* Mother of Saint *Peter* and *Paul* Romans, whom he had taught, he saluteth multitude of Saints and christians at Rome, naming them particularly, but giveth not Saint *Peter* any, (this should have been Superiour and Master) but *Paul* and all the faithfull of Rome writing and confederation of the holy Scripture, so, seeing may be shewn to prove, than Saint *Peter* was ever Bishop Rome, nor ever was at Rome.

But I think not the question of so great importance to longer the eyes and minds of the Reader thereupon; for we grant that he was both at *Rome*, and was Bishop at *Rome*, can give no superiority to the Pope of *Rome* (Saint *Peter* never had it as you have sufficiently heard) and although he

credit

affirm, I had left out those in which the title of universall head is found.

But for an irreprehensible proof of this before any reasonable man, let them but read the lives of the Popes written by Popish authours, especially by one *Dn Choesne*, a modern writer, who doth not forget nor omit any thing to prove the Primacy and power of the Popes of Rome; there yee may see in the life of every Pope, the name and subject of all those who write to him; and whereof any knowledge could be had; and this man thinketh to draw great advantage for the Primacy of the Bishop of Rome, from the multitude of letters written to him from so many places, which was onely done for the reason alleadged before: but not so much as one word is there to be seen of Superiour or universall head of the Church, or any such like thing, but onely of fellow-Bishop, brother, companion, coequall, or some such thing, which shewed no Superiority or Primacy, but onely equality: as for the word Pope, which is as to say Father, or (if ye will) Father of fathers, *Pater patrum*; it was a name common in ancient time to all Bishops: and when they called him Bishop, that was neither universall, nor yet of Rome nor Romane (but very seldome) but onely Bishop of the Citie of Rome; to shew, that in those times his Jurisdiction extended not without the walls and suburbs of the Citie of Rome. Whence it may be observed, that in much probability, the Bishops yet of those times were no more than the Pastours of parishes, as it is certain they were at the first institution, there being not yet at that time speech of dioceese, nor of Pastour that had authoritie over many Pastours or Churches; and the number of Christians being but small every where, one Pastour did serve and was sufficient for the greatest Cities, who was called Bishop, using the aid and assistance in his charge of the Presbyters, (that is to say) Elders; and out of the number of the Elders was ordinarily chosen the Bishop, which is to say, Intendent or overseer of the flock, (but this by the way.)

Now to return to the Bishop of Rome: it is true, that some times they were transported with flattery, or by way of civility and complement to give him some titles and Epithites of praise; savouring more of flattery than truth, extolling either his learning or holinesse beyond all christian modesty and appearance of truth: but by a speciall providence of God, who would conserve this pure doctrine for his elect, or because that was too great

a prejudice for them, they were never induced to give him any title, which might any way shew that Primacie or generall superiority, and that without any contradiction of the whole Romish Church, to the time of *Sylvester*, which is about 300. years, and a long time also after him.

Which if the Bishop of Rome had had, or thought to have had, it was highly to wrong him in writing to him, and not giving him those titles of honour which were due unto him: Nor was it a good way to obtain satisfaction in that which they asked, to refuse him those qualities of superioritie his subjects did owe him, especially in so tectling and important a thing. Is there any Prince in the world, that would not have reason to be offended, if one of his vassals writing to him should call him comrade and companion, writing nothing in his letter to shew his submission, and the dependence he hath on his Lord; and yet in those first ages, we read not of any Pope that was offended with any Bishops who writ to them, for calling them brother, fellow Bishop, or companion, or for denying him the title of Universall Head.

This therefore is a manifest proofe that no Bishops did beleeve the Pope of Rome to be universall head of the Church, and that the Bishops of Rome did not think it of themselves: if this consequence be not reasonable, I know not what may be thought reasonable in the world; Judge thou indifferent Reader, with a spirit of sincerity, and void of passion.

They of the Romish Church, it may be, will produce against all that we have cleerly alledged and proved from the Scriptures or otherwise, a number of passages, out of some Fathers, men of the first ages (for since *Sylvester* that the greatnesse of the Bishop of Rome did begin, we must not marvell for the reasons alledged) which seem to give the Primacy to St. *Peter*, and the Bishop of Rome; but the answer is brief in this and other points; if they produce ten seeming testimonies for them, I shall produce a dozen to the contrary, taken out of the same Fathers, a great deale stronger, cleerer, and of greater force than others.

But not to stay any longer upon their needlesse things; let them shew us the true manuscripts, written by those ancient Fathers, and we will take the pains to read them, and examine their opinions; although nothing ought to be opposed to the holy Scriptures.

But

But to alledge us books written eight or nine hundred yeers after the Autographs, and written or printed after a thousand copies, and under the highest power of the Church of Rome, there is no reason we should trouble our brains with them, and also those books, being laid together, can in nothing equall nor come neer the authoritie of the holy Scriptures, which are avowed and acknowledged of all men, and speak most clearly and manifestly in this point.

And so for the Fathers in this and other matters, because I will say no other thing than that which I have said in the seventh Chapter of this book, I intreat the Reader to see it there.

But how cometh it to passe, that the Pope of Rome hath possessed himself of so great an authority, and maintaineth the same in so high a degree for so many ages.

CHAP. XII.

In what manner and at what time the Bishop of Rome usurped the Primacie.

THose who will read and consider attentively the History of the Christian Church, especially the life and history of the Popes, written by Popish Authors themselves, will cleerly see that the first 300. yeers after the death of our Saviour, to the time of Pope *Sylvester*, the Bishop of Rome did pretend no authoritie over the Bishops, nor did any give him the title of Universall Head and Bishop in any of the Epistles, which were written unto him: the Bishop and Church of Rome afflicted with the persecutions and tyrannies of the Emperours, imploying their thoughts rather for the conservation of the faith, in the practise of humility and patience, than in ambition and usurpation of any authoritie which belongeth no wayes unto them.

But as honours change manners, and seldome to the better, *Constantine* the Emperour having been baptized by *Sylvester* then Bishop of Rome, and made the first Christian Emperour by an excessive zeal of devotion (to the great prejudice since of all Christendome) transferred his Court to Constantinople, leaving the City of Rome to *Sylvester*, with a donation of many Lands, Lordships, and rents; so by that gift the Bishop of Rome became

the richest and greatest Lord and most considerable, without comparison of all the Bishops of the Christian Church, it being knowne through the world, that the sole Emperour and Monarch of the world, had left him his imperiall Citie, and inriched and gratified him with so great wealth and honour for him and his successors the Bishops of Rome; and howsoever this good Bishop did see himselfe possessed of all this wealth, yet did he never usurpe any primacy nor title of head and superiour over other Bishops or Christians himselfe, nor his successours for two hundred yeares after his death.

It is true, that being made the richest, potentest, and most considerable amongst all the Bishops, many began to honour him more, and write to him with greater respect (which ever followeth riches and greatnesse) and being thus eminent among all Christians, if there were any Bishop who was persecuted by other Bishops, or excommunicated by his Patriarch or Metropolitan, or by any Councell, either justly or unjustly, he went presently to Rome, addressing himselfe to the Bishop, as the richest of them all, to assist him, and the most powerfull and of greatest authoritie, to protect him against his adversaries: and as necessitie and extremitie passe often all the limits of truth, many amongst them to captivate his good will and favour, strove to give him as great titles as their industry could suggest; and although they who gave them, and they towhom they were given, knew sufficiently that it was wrongfully and without reason, or the Word of God, nevertheless the extremitie and necessitie of the one made them sublime even in that point, depriving themselves of some things which justly belonged to them to give them to the Bishop, from whom they expected assistance; and the vanitie which did creep in and diffuse it selfe in the hearts, made many Popes receive those titles without contradiction (at least apparant) or opposition that was capable to hinder the progresse.

In *Sylvester* his time indeed, it did clearly appeare that the greatnesse and authoritie of the Bishop of Rome did grow and increase mightily; Nevertheless, the title of generall Pastour or universall head of Bishops, or Vicar of Christ Jesus on earth was not yet in use, nor was it given or usurped by any: and the first Bishop of Rome in whose time the title of universall Bishop began to be spoken of, was *Gregory*, who lived above an hundred and fiftie yeares after *Sylvester*, between the fifth and sixth age; I call them

and

and others, Saints, after the manner of the Romish Church, that it may the better be knowne of whom I speake, I having no purpose here to question their holines, seeing also the Apostle calleth all Christians Saints; and although it is apparant, that the puritie of the Church was already much changed under this Pope, yet he had modestly enough, pertinently to refuse this title which was offered him, and to reprove and blame the same severely in the Bishop of *Constantinople*, who challenged and usurped that which hitherto had been attempted by none other. And however, my resolution be not to overcharge this Treatise with passages of Fathers, I hope notwithstanding that it shall not be amisse to set downe S^t *Gregories* own words on this subject, which even those of the Romish Church confesse to be true and not Apocrypha, and shew so neere as I can the summe of the History.

There was at that time in *Constantinople* a Bishop named *John*, a man exceeding ambitious, desiring to extend the limits of his Diocesse as farre as was those of the Empire, and usurpe the title of universall Bishop over the whole Church; even as the Emperour who had his residence in that Citie, was generall and universall Monarch of the world; a title which before him no Bishop durst usurpe; which *Gregory* Bishop of Rome seeing and considering how great consequence & prejudice it was to his See, and all other Bishops, he as the most potent and remarkable among them (for the causes I have already set downe) opposeth stoutly, labouring violently to repell the boldnesse and temeritie of this usurper, *Greg. l. 4. Epist. 76.* without complaining therefore that *John* had therein incroached upon any priviledge appertaining to him, and all the Bishops of Rome; but he courageously maintaineth that title to be prophane, sacrilegious, and a presage of the comming of Antichrist; see the *Idem. l. 4. Epist. 78.* 76 Epistle 4 Book.

And in the 78 Epistle of the same Book, *It is* (saith he) *a thing so hard to indure, that our brother and fellow-Bishop should be alone called Bishop in contempt of all the rest; and what other thing doth his arrogance portend, but that the time of Antichrist approacheth already, in so far as he imitateth him, who disdaining the company of Angells, strayed to ascend to the top of singularitie.*

In the 80 Epistle of the same Book, he saith, *None of my prede-* *Idem. l. 4.* *cessours would use this prophane word, because if one will call himselfe* *Epist. 80.* *universall Patriarch: the name of Patriarch is stolne from others; but far be it from a Christian soule, that any should falsly ascribe to*

himselfe, that whereby he diminisheth any thing from the honour of
brethren; to consent to that unjust speech, is no other thing then to
from the faith; one thing we owe to the unitie of faith, and anot
thing to suppresse pride; and I say boldly, that he who calleth him
Pastour universall, or desireth so to be called, surpasseth the Antich
in pride, because by pride he exalteth himselfe above others.

Idem. l. 6. Epist. 188. In his 188 Epistle of the first Book, see his words; I know
that he could not have peace with us, if he corrected not the vanit
that superstitious and ambitious word, which hath been invented by
first Apostat; and to speak nothing of the injury done to your hono
if a Bishop be called universall, that universall once falling, the univ
sall Church must also fall downe.

Idem. l. 1. Epist. 30. Thus much saith S. Gregory of the arrogance of John, Patriar
of Constantinople, who would appropriate this title to himself
he blameth his insolence, and applieth not to himselfe that w
he denieth to him; but rather refuseth it being offered in th
words in the thirtith Epistle of hit seventh Book; Behold, (saith
in the Preface of the Epistle) yee have sent unto mee (I having for
it) yee have wrote a word full of ambition, calling mee universall P
which I intreat you yee would use no more, for it is taken from y
which is given to any other more than reason requireth. As for me
account it no honour do see the honour of my brethren diminished;
my honour is the honour of the universall Church, and the solid and
ritie of my brethren. Now if your sanctitie call mee the Pope unl
sall, you deny your selfe to be such in calling mee universall.

And thus much S. Gregory in those places for the condemn
of that title as well in his owne person as in John, who would
for all submit thereto, but persisted still in his presumption,
would his successour after him for any intreaty part with
thing.

Judge by those testimonies if in those times the Bishop of Ro
was thought or did thinke himselfe generall Pastour and Head
the Church, his power and authoritie being already very gre
but not yet come to the presumption of usurping that dignity
primacy; for that seemed to be an usurpation of such consequ
and prejudice to all other Bishops, that he durst not attempt
publikely for feare of a generall opposition from all other Bisho
who might also have interposed the authoritie of the Emperor.

And howsoever, the Bishop of Rome at that time did she
great inclination to their primacy for perfecting of their gre

ffe, yet did they never dare to aſcribe the ſame to themſelves before it was given them by the wicked and perfidious Emperour *Phocas*, who having overcome and taken *Maurice*, ſucceeded in his place; and becauſe he was freely and without any contradiction crowned at Rome, in recompence would oblige the *Romans*, and ordained that the Church of Rome ſhould thereafter be chiefe of all the Churches, and that *Boniface* the third then Pope ſhould be univerſall Biſhop, and ſo was the controverſie determined by the power and authoritie of the Emperour.

If after all this, the title of head univerſall and generall Biſhop ought to be thought of divine right, and of divine and Apoſtolique inſtitution given to the Biſhop of Rome, I have done; beleeving that the gift and declaration of a wicked Emperour, maketh not the Inſtitution divine.

Thus you may perceive (friendly Reader) that Chriſt never gave it to S^t *Peter*, and that the Apoſtles never beleeved any ſuch thing, nor did S^t *Peter* himſelfe ever imagine to have it or make uſe of it. Yee ſee how almoſt ſix hundred yeares were finiſhed (which queſtionleſſe is a long time) after the death of our Saviour, before either the Biſhop of *Rome* was eſteemed or did eſteeme himſelfe generall Biſhop and Superiour over the whole Church; and now to ſay that it is the inſtitution of Jeſus Chriſt, is it not to make men fooles? and beleeve they are geeſe void of all ſenſe and reaſon, not to perceive the impoſture? Nor is there any but ſimple and weake wits will beleeve it in the Romiſh Church; and if it be any Article of faith (as the Pope & his adherents preach, and as the Councell of *Trent* declareth) there is none by that reaſon in the Romiſh Church, but weake judgements, who are in the paths of ſalvation.

Chap. XIII.

How the Biſhop of Rome hath and doth labour to maintaine his uſurped Primacy, and after what manner the Pope is elected at this preſent.

I Know the Cardinall *Baronius*, a man otherwiſe learned, and of great authoritie in the Church of *Rome*, in his Eccleſiaſticall Hiſtory hath endeavoured, above all things, to ſhew the primacy of the

the Bishop of *Rome*, as being the principall end and cause of all his painfull labours; but I protest that he saith nothing contrary to all I have spoken here of the History of the Popes, except only that he striveth to draw more advantageous consequences for the Bishop of *Rome*, but with what sincerities and ground, the indifferent Reader may judge.

And because he sheweth (that which I have granted) that Letters were written from divers places, and from many Churches to the Bishop of *Rome* since S^t *Peters* death, either to have his advice in matter of faith, or clearing of some doubts in Religion, or composing of some differences risen amongst the Bishops, as to one of their fellow-Bishops and brethren, who had great authoritie amongst them, as being the Bishop of the Metropolis of the world where the Emperour did reside; he concludeth every where the primacy; but with very bad consequences; as doe many more of his fellowes, who taking pay of the Romish Church, either for feare to loose the Benefices they have, or in hope to obtaine better and greater, doe all that lyeth in their power to extoll the same, dissembling often those errours they perceive, and labouring to cloake and excuse that which they cannot deny.

Certainly, there is no man who reading the Cardinall *Baronius* with a minde void of passion, will not clearly perceive that he proceedeth after that manner; and indeed, according to the policy and wisdome of this world (which is nevertheless foolishnesse before God) he could not doe otherwise; for he was wise enough to see and foresee, if he wrote otherwise than in the favour of his Holines and the Romish Church, he could never have aspired to the Cardinalship which he obtained thereby, nor to the honours and gratifications the Pope imparted to him thereafter, for having maintained so advantageously his authoritie and pretended rights.

Now to returne to my purpose, the Bishop of Rome having once obtained the title of universall Bishop and generall Pastour of the Church, by the donation and investure of the Emperour, he being already in possession of great authoritie and abundance of great riches, it was not hard for him to maintaine and conserve it in despite of all oppositions that were raised from time to time by Bishops who had not so much riches and authoritie as he, nor a backe strong enough to contest it against him, and make him quit the title, but rather hath laboured to exalt himselfe more

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and more, taking occasion from the weaknesse and necessitie, or the simplicitie and devotion of Princes to augment his authoritie and estate.

And he who by the meanes and beneficence of the Emperours was invested in the possession of his greatnesse, primacy, and riches, rose in a small time to that point, as to strive to depose them from their thrones, and usurp the right of creating and crowning them, make them kisse and adore his feet, nay even to set his feet upon their necke; abusing those words of the *Psal.* 91. 13. *Thou shalt walke upon the Aspe & Basiliske, and the Lyon and the Dragon shalt thou tread under-foot*; as did *Alexander* the third to the Emperour *Fredericke Barberousse*; and his sonne *Henry* the sixt (saith *Baronius*) being brought to the feet of Pope *Innocent* the third, there to receive the Imperiall Crowne upon his knees, and it being set upon his head as he was on his knees before the Pope who was on a throne, he beat it off with his foot, saying to him with an unsupportable arrogancy, Know that as I have had the power to set the Crowne on thy head, so have I to take it from thee, and deprive thee thereof at my pleasure. But they took their time and opportunitie of the infirmity and misery of those afflicted Princes, to exercise upon them the usurpation of their Empire. Psal. 91. 13.

And no man of understanding will peruse the History, but he may see, that as the Emperours had invested the Bishops of *Rome* in the title and qualitie of Head of the Church, so for a long time after, they reteined the authority to create and install them in their See, and depose and turne them out; neither was any admitted or received, but by consent of the Emperour: And if in the absence and distance of the Emperour, the *Romanes* at any time medled themselves with the choosing of the Pope, they sent continually to the Emperour to have his consent; which sometimes he gave and other times refused.

And because time altereth and changeth all things; that which sometime before was done by all the Romane people with the aforesaid conditions, became by little and little to be reduced to the Clergie alone, which as the Pope grew greater and richer, did also augment their revenues and power, gathering the crummes from a Table so excessively furnished as was that of the Pope; and so the consent of the Emperour began by little & little to be neglected, but principally then when the Emperours were far distant, and taken up in other places with warres and troubles, and had

neither meanes nor power to oppose or contradict that Election; And when they did oppose themselves, it had often divers successes, and occasioned many sad Histories, and lamentable Tragedies.

But in the end, the power and riches of the Emperour diminishing by their dissolute life, and the revolting of Princes their subjects, and the Church of Rome growing continually in riches and wealth, through the too simple devotion and liberalitie of many Princes, the whole power of the Election of the Pope came to the Cardinalls, who in the beginning were the chiefest and richest among the Clergy of the Citie of Rome, and now are chosen out of divers Nations, but more of *Italy* than of all the rest of the world together; all of them bearing title of some Church in the Citie of Rome; and by them alone at this present is the Pope chosen; but with all the corruptions and abominations which can be imagined in the Election of a Potentate.

For when it is in question to make a new Pope, there is no passion that is not set on worke, there is no indirect means left unassayed, no symony that is not committed. The Pope being dead, all is in disorder and confusion in the Citie of Rome; every vice and crime is committed there without punishment or inquiry, all revenge practised; the Officers made by the defunct Pope having no more power: there is sixteene or seventeene dayes allotted to the Cardinalls, to conveene and enter into the Conclave, which is a place furnished with Chambers and little roomes, fitted for the Election.

Those who pretend to be Pope, make commonly many faire promises to obtaine the voices of the Electors; to some they promise their Pallaces, to others, Offices and Benefices; to some the advancement of their kindred: in a word, all they can imagine profitable to themselves. The Cardinalls Nephewes of the defunct Popes, as the richest and most potent of the Romish Church, being inriched and made great by the favour and power of their Unkles, have each of them their factions and Caballs apart, composed of those who are ingaged to them, by benefits and curtesies received and pretended, or in favour of the Cardinalls cap, or some other gratifications, given them by the Popes their Unkles, not speaking of their alliances and other considerations of neerneese they have among them.

After that, is the faction of Princes, of the Emperour, the King

of

of *France*, *Spaine*, and *Poland*, of the Princes and Republicks of *Italy*, who by their Embaſſadours and Pentioners, labour all of them to have a Pope that favoureth the greatneſſe of their eſtates.

Laſt of all, is the Faction which they call of ſpiritualls, which are they that endeavour to chooſe for Pope, him whom according to their conſcience they thinke moſt proper and fit, and whom they beleeve will be moſt profitable for the Church. But this number is commonly very ſmall; and in the Election of Pope *Vrban* the eighth, who at this preſent holdeth the chaire of the Biſhop of Rome of fifty-three Cardinalls, who were preſent in the Conclave for the Election, a Gentleman of the Romiſh Church at that time reſiding at Rome, who hath faithfully written the Hiſtory which is publikely to be ſeen in the Booke of the Empires and States of the world, ſaith that there were but three in all of the ſpirituall faction, which aymed onely at the Election of the beſt, without conſidering the Intreſt of *France* or *Spaine*, or any particular benefit or utilitie.

And alſo after the ſame or a worſe manner, have all the modern Elections been which I have read; as yee may ſee more amply in the Books that are written thereof, ſo common in the world as they need not be ſpecified by me.

Now as the faction of thoſe good and ſpirituall men, who aymе onely to chooſe the beſt and moſt proper, is queſtionleſſe ever the leaſt and weakeſt; and as the worldly factions are ever the greateſt and ſtrongeſt, it is needleſſe to aske what doth ordinarily follow; and it is a marvell, if a good and impartiall and not factious be choſen for Pope; I ſpeak even according to the beliefe of the Romiſh Church.

They ſpeak indeed a little of the holy Spirit, and invoke his aſſiſtance, but that is onely with their lips and for ceremony, (the holy Spirit ſhunning ſuch corrupt company, that is ſo little diſpoſed to receive his motions) thence cometh it, that they are ſometimes moneths, yeares, yea, ten, twenty, thirty, or forty yeares, they cannot nor will not agree; and ſome of them make one Pope, others another; this Pope creating his Cardinalls and Biſhops, and the other his; with what diſorder and ſcandall to all Chriſtians, I leave you to judge, the Earth oftentimes bleeding at their execrations.

And I may truely ſay that almoſt all the Popes are created by ſymony; for all the Princes well knowing by many experiences

that the Election of the Popes is seldome according to the lawes of conscience, but by corruption and favour; they are obliged to entertaine, expressly for that end, Pentioners amongst the Cardinalls, to whom they give yearly Pensions, or some fat Benefices of their disposition, and so buy their voyces, that at the Election they may have a Pope of their faction.

The rich and powerfull Cardinalls, who are commonly the Nephewes of the defunct, practise the same with those who are poore, labouring to gaine and possesse their Suffrages, either by benefits received, or hope to receive, not indeed to be Popes, because their families would become too great, and eat up others, but to reigne under the name of some other, whom they caused to be elected.

The Cardinalls who pretend to be Pope, spare nothing commonly to captivate to themselves voyces and friends; and because oftentimes they be not very rich, they are content to promise more than they have a minde to performe, yea more than they are able.

So by all those fashions which are most common and ordinary, there is almost not one who is not chosen by symony, and consequently who entreth not in the Sheepfold, not as a good Pastour by the doore, but as a ravenous Wolfe, breaking the wall to feed and fill himselfe with the bloud and substance of the Sheepe, and not to feed them with the nourishment and food of life.

And because they use, before the Election to made some Bulls which thunder out the most fearfull excommunications and anathema's is possible against all those who proceed to this election by direct or indirect symony, or any other crooked or unlawfull courses, declaring them unfit and uncapable of any Ecclesiasticall Office or Benefice; there are almost none of those elected, who are not anathamatized with most terrible excommunications, and by those Bulls made uncapable to keep the Office; so that even thereby their election is voide, and their possession of no force and unjust, and all exercise of their power invalid; but are even irregular so often as they exercise any act of their charge, or administer any Sacraments: And nevertheless, they often continue so many years; but as they imagine themselves to have all power to binde & loose on earth, so doe they quickly loose themselves from all those Anathema's being once Popes, extending the same favour to all those who have assisted them in that mystery of iniquitie.

By

By such corrupt and diabolicall election it hathcome to passe, that such abominable Monsters the Earth hath seen fit in the chair of *Rome*, that none can read the History of the Popes written by Papists themselves, but their hairrriseth with horrour: it is not my intention here to set down the abhominations which are to be seen in those books, howsoever written with all the moderation possible to a favourable Historian, for I will not here be accounted invective, and those who have not read those books should suspect me of that crime in producing such a multitude, as hardly could they beleeve them being written by my hand.

But let those who will, read there the life of *Urbanus* the seventh who for a light suspition put to death eight of his Cardinals cruelly, causing to be sowed five of them in one sack, and did throw them into the Sea before his eyes, he being present in the same ship. Oh more than barbarous crueltie for a Churchman!

Let them see the life of *Alexander* the sixth, sometimes called *Borgia*, a native of *Spaine*, who gave the Indies to the King of *Spaine*, where he had nothing himself, and gratified him further with the brave title of Catholick King; Let them but read, I say, the life of that good Pope; and they shall see how many bastards he had, and how, loving one of them called *Valentine* excessively, although the Murtherer of his own eldest brother to get his estate, he had resolved to poyson all the richest Cardinals of his Court at one time, at a feast he had prepared for them in the Countrey, thereby to inrich his foresaid bastard with their spoils; but that cruell designe was both prevented and punished by God: for being thirstie before dinner, the butler either ignorantly or by the just judgement of God, taking the bottle with the poysoned wine for the wholesome, the Pope having drunk of it, died presently; and that *Valentine* who drunk also with him, being younger and stronger than he, died not presently, but languished the rest of his life.

An infinite number of such or the like actions, little better (if not worse) are to be seen in their lives and histories, where I rather wish the Reader to search them, than that I should blot my book with them; for if I should set them down here, the simple and ignorant would beleeve I spoke with more passion than truth, many of their actions surpassing all belief.

And if there be found any amongst those Popes well bred, and

of a courteous and wise disposition (that hath seldome come to passe) nevertheleſſe they have been guiltie (some few excepted) of the common crime of inriching their Nephews, bastards, and kinsfolks with the goods of the Church, and the blood and substance of poore Christians, so far as their power could extend it: and those have been the materials that have builded and cemented almost all the most potent families at this day in *Italy*. But let us a little reflect upon the power of the Popes of *Rome*, and their election, for it is an important point.

CHAP. XIIII.

A notable reflection upon the usurped power of the Pope and his election, and how much all Princes, Prelates, and Christians, even Romanes, are interressed therein.

I Have sufficiently shewne before, that S^t. *Peter* never had the Primacy, and how that which the Bishop of *Rome* pretended being usurped, is unlawfull, and of no force.

But let us suppose that Jesus Christ did establish S^t. *Peter* for his Vicar on earth, and for Head of the Church after his death; Nay suppose that S^t. *Peter* was Bishop of *Rome*; it will not therefore follow, that the primacie of the Church is bound to the Bishop of *Rome*; and that, he must be head of the Church, who is created Bishop of the City of *Rome*, or that the people of *Rome* have the privilege to give a generall Head to the universall Church, as those of the Romish Church are forced to confesse.

S^t. *Peter* (say they) was Bishop of *Rome*, and erected his chaire at *Rome*, therefore he hath placed and established the Primacie there: I am sure that S^t. *Peter* also and first was Bishop of *Antioch*, after the death of the Son of God, therefore the seat of Primacie should be rather at *Antioch*. Yes, but he lived and died at *Rome*; Our Saviour who was the chief Priest, and Head of the Church, without controversie died at *Jerusalem*; at *Jerusalem* therefore rather should the Primacie and first chaire be: and seeing *Moses* who was principall amongst the people, and chief Doctor did exercise his office, and die in the Wildernesse, therefore ought

he Israelites also to make the seat of their primacie and principa-
tie in the wildernesse.

They must then of necessitie say that the priviledge of primacie
was personall and not locall, given to the person of S. *Peter*, and
ot to the City of *Rome*, where he setled his last See; they
aving as yet found no such passage in the holy Scripture,
ommanding the primacie to be annexed to the Bishoprick of
Rome.

If then the primacie of the Church was not bound to the Bishop
f *Rome*, what right have the Romanists had to give a generall
ead to all Christians, as they have done a long time? And al-
hough it had been annexed to him; when it was a question to
reate a Primate by the course of election, all Christians ought to
e called to give their voice, either themselves, or by their depu-
es, and chuse him whom they were to obey; which never being
one, sheweth sufficiently that election was not lawfull, and so
ther Christians were not obliged to obey him, they having nei-
er been called, nor had voice in his election; it being the Law of
l Canonique election, that all those who have interest be called
give their voice and suffrages, either themselves or by their de-
uties: But let us leave those ancient elections, and see if that which
now adayes, be surer and juster.

Here Oh Noble Princes and Prelates of the Romish Church, I
ish earnestly ye would onely lift up your eyes and consider how
uch ye are interressed in the election of the Popes practised now
dayes.

When it is a question to create a generall and universall Pastor
the Church, I believe that all Princes and Pastors, yea and all
hristians ought to be called to elect and chuse themselves, or by
eir deputies, him whom they must obey, and who ought to keep
d guide their souls, and on whom all the good or evill of the
hurch dependeth; But this is not observed; they contenting
emselves with the Cardinals, who represent, say they, the Cler-
e of the Church.

Here I might ask who those Cardinals be whom they call Prin-
s of the Church, and upon whom the Church is said to rest and
ove as a doore on the hinges; for from the word *Cardine* is Car-
nall taken; and it is known to every man that some of them are
mple Priests, others Bishops, and others neither Priests nor Bi-
ops, but ordinarily great Lords and Princes, to whom that dig-

nitie

nitie is given for the greatneſſe of their family, the moſt part
them being very rich, and abounding in wealth, and pleaſure
who repreſent nevertheleſſe (as they ſay) the Apoſtles and diſ
ples of Jeſus Chriſt, although the difference be as great betwi
the Cardinals and the Diſciples as betwixt day and night, and
great Chaos betwixt thoſe conditions; and nevertheleſſe theſe a
the guides and leaders of the flock of Chriſt, the Counſellours
the univerſall Paſtor, and the onely men can give a Paſtor to t
Church.

But conſider (I pray you) what prejudice it is to Princes an
Kingdoms hereby: the Popes labouring to perpetuate that Pri
macy within the families and confines of *Italy*, make of purpoſe
great number of Italians Cardinals, for one of other countreys
and I am full perſwaded if there be ſixtie Cardinals, there are ev
more than fourtie of them Italians, and it may be three or foure
every other Nations: and when the Pope is dead, there being b
16. or 17. dayes purpoſely to conveene and make a new electio
there are none but the Cardinals in *Italy* can be preſent; ſo it
not to be marvelled if the Pope who is now adayes created, is ev
an Italian, it being impoſſible to other Cardinals who are implo
ed in their charges or about their Princes to be preſent in tim
their number being even too ſmall to contradict or carrie it,
though they were there.

But I would willingly ask who hath made *Italy* dearer to G
than other Kingdoms and Nations, to carry this priviledge, a
to give and impoſe a Law upon all other Chriſtians of the worl
Was Chriſt Jeſus and S. *Peter* born in Italy? they were born a
iſſued from Judea: ought Italy (which is but a ſmall peece
ground) to give Laws to the whole world, and to bring all oth
Chriſtians under their yoke? Is it a Nation of greater worth th
is *France*, *Spaine*, *Germany*, or other Kingdoms, greater and riche
more powerfull and renowned, than ſhe is, to bring them alſo
der her Empire? If the Head of the Church ought to be creat
by election, to make the election juſt, equitable, and lawfull,
Kingdoms ſhould be advertiſed of the day of the election, t
they may have time to come or ſend their deputies thither, L
them have equalitie of voice, as many and no more, of *Italy*, th
of *France*, or *Spaine*; let *Italy* although but little, hold t
place of a Kingdom, and have as many voices if they will, as
greater and more powerfull Kingdom, (that might be ſuffere

and it is all the favour it could pretend) let the election be made at *Rome*, and let the Pope live there if he list, this might be born with, providing all the Christian Kingdoms might have time to send their deputies, and be received with equalitie of voice and suffrage; so he who should be chosen in this manner might more lawfully be esteemed head of the Church, if not by divine, at least by humane right and Ecclesiastical policie; and Christians having after this manner contributed and consented to his election, might have some reason to acknowledge him for superiour, and obey him.

But to be elected as he is now adayes; although in all times there had been a head in the Church, he who is elected after this manner cannot be justly and lawfully esteemed for such a one; for the election is altogether unjust, and consequently invalid; and therefore none are bound to obey him; I speak even according to the Laws of the Romish Church, supposing also that Jesus Christ had had intention to leave another Head than himself to the Church on earth.

I marvell that Kings and Princes who have so great power, and so wise Counsell neer them, should so suffer this great injustice to be done to all Christians, that depend on their Authority, and take no order with it: are there not as wise men, and capable to govern the Church in their Dominions as in *Italy*? Is it necessary that it be continually governed at this day by an Italian? and that all the Congregations and orders of the Romish Church be also governed by men whom the Pope laboureth by his policy to have ever of his Nation, to reign and maintain himself with more full power? Those whom this doth concern, know sufficiently what I mind to say.

And must all the goods and almes of Christians serve onely to augment and inrich all the families of *Italy*, one after another? and that strangers can never pretend any part in that wherein they have as much interest as the others, and the materials of which they furnish at their proper charge, and to the great oppression of the people, which might be much eased, if those innumerable summes of gold, which go every yeer out of their Dominions to maintain the dissoluteness and excesse of the Pope and his Court, did remain within the countrey, or were converted to the use of the Kings and Princes; nor is it without cause that the Italians mock other Popish Nations, for suffering themselves to

be ſo gulled by them; and truly they have good reaſon: Let thoſe who have the authoritie and power in their hands look to it if they pleaſe. I ſpeak this even according to the maximes of the Romiſh Church and their worldly policie; but this is not the greateſt evil, nor the thing I intend moſt in this diſcourſe.

By this it may be ſeen how the Pope of *Rome* abuſeth the bountie of Princes and Chriſtians, to maintain himſelf in his authoritie; and howſoever S. *Peter* and the other Apoſtles were ſubject to Princes, he himſelf in his 1 *Epiſt.* 2 Chap. 13 verſe, exhorting
1 Pet. 2. 13 Chriſtians to all dutifull obedience, and eſpecially that obedience and ſubjection that is due to Kings and Princes. Notwithſtanding the Pope at this day ſaith, that he is exempted from all ſpirituall and temporall Laws and juriſdiction; thinking he holdeth of none but himſelf on earth, labouring to uſurpe the ſame authoritie over Kings and Princes, that the Son of God had, and apply-
Mat. 28. 18 ing to himſelf that of our Saviour, *Matth.* 28. 18. *All power is given to me in heaven and earth*, but with this difference, that although Chriſt had the authority, yet he made no uſe of it, but ever ſubmitted himſelf to Princes and Kings of the earth; and the Pope having not this power, uſurpeth it nevertheleſſe ſo farre as he can.

Thence cometh it to paſſe, that he would bring under his authoritie and Dominions, Kings and Princes, and pretendeth them all to be ſubject and tributarie to his power, not onely in ſpirituall, but even in temporall things, and that with that ſubtiltie and craft, which *Bellarmine* and other Romiſh Doctors call indirect juriſdiction and power; whereby he maketh all the States, Empires and actions of Princes liable to his authoritie; it being impoſſible, but ſome intereſt or pretext of Religion or ſpirituall good be alwayes mixed with it, over which the Pope pretendeth direct authoritie, &c.

And therefore it is a Maxime in the Romiſh Schooles, that he may depoſe, eſtabliſh, and excommunicate Kings, interdict their Dominions and Kingdoms, give all their eſtates in prey to the firſt Conquerour, under the pretext and colour of Religion; and if he think them not ſtrongly addicted to maintain his faith and doctrine, or rather if they ſhew not themſelves zealous of the augmentation and conſervation of his greatneſſe and authoritie; for this is the word of the Caballe, and the true cauſe of the uſurpation of ſuch a power, beſides the inſatiable ambition which is naturall to every one. And

And grounded upon this maxime, the Pope hath made use of that authoritie upon all occasions, and doth it yet so much as he can. Witnesse that which the Pope hath lately done upon the Dukedomes of *Ferrara* and *Urbin* in *Italy*; which States he hath handsomely seized upon; and would questionlesse do the same or worse with all other Princes, if his power did equall his will.

But men are not now so simple as formerly; and the Popes Canons fright now adayes but few, for now they begin to crack, and most Princes are too strong and wise now to be led so by the nose, or submit their necks under his feet, as some of their Ancestors did; although I beleeve there would be many Pope *Innocents* found, if there were any Prince like *Frederick Barbarosse*, but they of our time are not so simple.

Nevertheless he desisteth not (as he did in ancient time) to abuse timorous spirits, and make the name and interests of S^t. *Peter* to resound loud every where, if a Prince take back that which the Pope had usurped upon him, he crieth that he robbeth S^t. *Peter*; if he beg any thing from them to make up his greatnesse, it is, saith he, for S. *Peter* and S. *Paul*; if any refuse him, they refuse S. *Peter*, saith he; Oh but S^t. *Peter* will be warie to take part in all those greatnesses and worldly vanities which are so contrary to his exhortations, so far from his examples, and so little beseeming the office of a true Pastor of souls, and a Christian Priest.

But those pretexts have served him very much to deceive and cozen a number of simple Princes, with whose goods he being once enriched, thereafter becometh more potent and proud to make war against them, and ruine them utterly and their successours; or else hath inriched his kindred, and increased and augmented his estate in such sort, that it far exceedeth at this present that of the greatest Princes of Europe.

For what Prince is there at this present in Europe who hath 24000. crowns to spend every day as the Pope of *Rome*? and all this either begged or usurped under the name and pretext of S^t. *Peter*. But I would willingly demand, if he worketh the works of S^t. *Peter*, and liveth as he did so to borrow his name; had S^t. *Peter* as great wealth? did he make as great chear? and keep such a Court? or so much inriched his kindred? did S^t. *Peter* govern his Church with so great state and pompe? Yes truly with greater povertie, zeal, and modesty, with greater sanctitie and edification; and I fear much that those who use so wrongfully the name of S^t.

Peter, be condemned one day by the example of S^t. *Peter*, whose name and cloke they use, not imitating his works.

I know they find reasons to cover that magnificence and glistering vanity; but there is nothing in the world how absurd and bad soever, but the spirit of man can give some reason for it; and if the foolish and ridiculous fashion should come in the world, to walk with the feet upwards, and the head downwards, some reason might be given of it, as did that people which cut off young girles feet in their Countrey; but if those reasons be worthy to be received, let men judge.

And if the Popes complain (as they do) of the contempt of the Princes of our age towards them; let them live as did S^t. *Peter*, whose name they carrie, then Princes and all Christians will respect them as S^t. *Peter*.

Indeed every one now seeth and confesseth, that the lay Lords have been (in a manner) too simple, suffering themselves to be so easily cozened by the craft and insatiable avarice of the Romish Clergie, who under pretext of devotion, of Purgatory, and long prayers (as saith the Evangelist) have snatched the pleasantest and sweetest part of all the wealth in Christendome: (But of this perchance in another place.)

At this time men are wiser, and go no more in procession from far countreys to kisse the Popes pantofle; and if any go for the present, it is more through curiositie than for respect and devotion; though they cease not to transport many Millions of gold daily out of some Kingdoms, (to the great grief of many wise and good men) and carry it to *Rome*, to entertain the Popes Court in the pleasures and insolencies known to most men, to inrich his Nephews and kinsfolks, and whorle the Cardinals with a cortage of fourty or fiftie Coaches; in a word, to maintain the Romish Clergie in such abominations and dissoluteneſſe, that S. *Lewes* King of *France* could never have the heart to see them; they surpassing in excesse and dissoluteneſſe all the Cities of the world, even those where Christ Jesus and Gods Name is not known.

Let the Pope of *Rome* have whereon to live, and make good cheer (if he will) so long as he liveth, (that were sufferable) but to have 24000. crowns to spend every day is a little too much for an old Priest; and I beleeve that the over-plus would do an infinite of good to many poore Christians, Priests and Prelates also, both learned and understanding, who are constrained to live poorely

all

all the reſt of their daies (and I may ſay to faſt) that they may ſend exceſſive Annates to Rome, to feed his hounds and maintaine his exceſſe.

Happy and wiſe are thoſe Kingdomes and States, who have freed themſelves from that tyranny, and withdrawne their necks from under that hard and unſupportable yoake. I know the Pope is much grieved and fretteth daily for having by his preſumption and obſtinacy given occaſion to thoſe Princes, to open their eyes and ſee the darkneſſe and captivitie wherein they lived, and will beware to ſtirre ſo much another time, for feare his throne ſhould fall flat to the ground: But there is no remedy for that which is paſt, nor is there any appearance, they will ever returne and come back to the ancient collection of *Peters* penny.

Mens eyes are too open now againe to be deceived, and their noſes too apt to ſmell out their plots, which they are daily about to try, and would gladly execute if they could; he ſendeth Agents and imployeth ſpyes and men diſguiſed, eſpecially of ſome orders, who goe ſecretly from houſe to houſe, preaching his Indulgences and pardons, to move the people to acknowledge him, and reſtore his former revenues, (for this is the onely end of all his Inventions what ever pretext of faith and Religion he pretend,) but the carriers of thoſe Indulgences are no more in requeſt, and are onely good for nothing, but to cheat women and weak ſpirits; the world hath had ſo many of his Bulls and pardons, that they believe they will have no more need, but may live without them the ages to come; and wiſe Princes choſe rather to keepe their moneys for the eaſe of their ſubjects and conſervation of their eſtates, than to ſend it to the Pope to maintaine his Court in riot, and inrich his kindred; the falſeneſſe of his doctrine appearing too clearly now to be embraced by judicious and cleer-ſighted men.

CHAP. XV.

How abſurd is, and how little ground hath the pretended infallibilitie of the Biſhop of Rome, *and that it is not without cauſe he is called Antichriſt.*

THe Biſhop of Rome is not onely content to challenge the primacy and ſuperioritie over the whole Chriſtian Church, but

to ſtrengthen and increaſe his credit, he falleth into a folly inſup-
portable to every wiſe and underſtanding man; for he attributeth
to himſelfe the ſame infallibilitie and truth that God doth, af-
firming and maintaining that he cannot erre, no more than God
when he pronounceth any ſentence in matter of faith. This ſeemeth
to me a cunning ſubtilty, if it were as eaſily to be beleeved as in-
vented; for wanting the word of God and ſufficient Scripture to
eſtabliſh his primacy and univerſall ſuperioritie, he hath reſolved
to attribute to himſelfe the infallibilitie, to make men receive the
Scriptures according to his explication, to ground his authoritie
and eſtabliſh his doctrine thereby.

And this Article of infallibilitie is at this day come to ſuch
paſſe in the Romiſh Church, that it muſt be beleeved as pertaining
to faith, and neceſſary to ſalvation; it being forbidden under the
paine of being holden for an heretique, and Anathematized for
preaching to the contrary; and truely it is a doctrine which
policy ought to follow that of the primacy, for the accompliſh-
ing of a perfect and abſolute authoritie. But as wee have ſhewed
this primacy to be uſurped and invalid, ſo doe we beleeve we have
ſufficiently nullified all that followeth upon thoſe prerogatives
whereof this is the principall; Notwithſtanding, for the greater
ſatisfaction of the courteous Reader, wee ſhall anſwer briefly to
principall reaſons they bring to prove this doctrine.

The firſt Objection is drawne out of a paſſage alledged before
Mat. 16. 18. where it is ſaid, *Mat.* 16. 18. *Thou art Peter, and upon this Rock*
will I build my Church, and the gates of hell ſhall not prevaile againſt
it. This (ſay they) being underſtood of S^t *Peter*, is to ſay that
errour and untruth ſhall not prevaile againſt *Peter*, nor have victo-
ry over him; and that he ſhall never be deceived nor erre, nor con-
ſequently the Pope, who tearmeth himſelfe ſucceſſour of S^t *Peter*.

Notwithſtanding, S^t *Peter* having erred after theſe words were
pronounced, and denied his Maſter, (which is the greateſt fall that
can be in the faith) ſheweth that thoſe words are not underſtood
of S^t *Peter*, but of the faith and confeſſion he made at that time
which being moſt true, and the truth it ſelfe, ſhall never be ov-
come nor ſurmounted by the gates of hell, but ſhall continue in
ſtrength eternally; and ſo it is in vaine for the Pope to ground his
infallibilitie upon words which are not ſpoken of S^t *Peter*, nor
conſequently of him, as is moſt manifeſt, and as I have ſhewed be-
fore.

Another Objection which the Romish Church thinks stronger and more expresse is this, *Luk.* 22. 32. *The Lord said to Simon, Simon behold Sathan hath sought to winnow thee as wheat, but I have prayed for thee that thy faith faile not; and then when thou shalt be converted, strengthen thy brethren.* Luk. 22. 32.

For my part I perceive not what they would conclude thereby, but that the faith of S^t *Peter* should never faile, and yet wee see that it failed much, and that S^t *Peter* did stumble and erre grossely in the faith, having denyed his Master a long time after those words were spoken. If then that be understood as they would have it, the prayers of Christ should be of none effect, (which is blasphemy to thinke,) wherefore we must finde out a truer meaning of those words, and say that is understood of finall falling, Christ Jesus saying to *Simon*, *Simon* I have prayed for thee that thy faith faile not finally; that is to say, if peradventure thou succombe and fall (as thou wilt) at least raise thy selfe, and enter againe into the profession of faith, and being converted by a true repentance, thou must confirme thy brethren, and let this fall make thee wiser in time to come, and be a means to thee to confirme others, and exhort them to take heed, least they slide and fall as thou. This is doubtlesse the true and lawfull meaning of those words (as every understanding man may judge) and not the explication of the Romish Church, which every reasonable man will finde to be altogether absurd, and invented of purpose to establish a false doctrine.

And although it could be proved that S^t *Peter* did never fall, and we should confesse that the infallibilitie was given to him: Will it therefore follow, that it is given to all his successours also? and that which was said to one person, and of one person, must be said to all his successours, and of them all? if they apply to the Pope all that was said to S^t *Peter* the Apostle, and in his favour by Christ Jesus, why doe they not apply as well all that was said to his disgrace? and so the Pope must be called Sathan, because Christ did call *Peter* so; those words must also be applyed to the Pope, *Thou shalt deny mee*, as our Saviour spake them to S^t *Peter*. This certainly hath too often falne out, to the great hurt and scandall of Christian people; although (I confesse) that our Saviour speaking to *Peter*, did not meane it of those who should be thought his successours.

Now these are the strongest passages and arguments, on which this

this pretended infallibilitie is grounded, which is the whole foundation and basis of all the Romish Doctrine now in controversie, which being proved to be usurped against reason and equitie, as the primacy whereon it is grounded; you see in what estate of errour and heresie that Church is in, and how blinde and deceived they are that follow it.

It was thought formerly strange, that the Pope of Rome was called Antichrist, and (I confesse) it was long before I could be satisfied with the application of this name to the Pope, thinking it was too rigorously spoken, and with too small ground; but when I came to consider and examine the ground more narrowly, I thought they had reason sufficient for so doing, especially for attributing to himselfe the infallibilitie, which is onely proper to God, and which is the most execrable blasphemy, Antichrist can commit; and the greatest of his offences, mentioned by S. *Paul* in
2 Thess. 2. 4. those words; *Even to sit as God in the Temple of God, and exalting himselfe above every thing that is called God*; for truely the Pope in this maketh himselfe as God, appropriating to himselfe infallible truth, which is onely proper to the Godhead, and is the Godhead it selfe.

Making himselfe further to be adored as God, yea more than God, causing men to carry him upon their shoulders at the Procession of the Sacrament, where that which they call the Hoast, or body of the Son of God, is onely carried on horseback, causing Christians, yea, Nobles and Princes, to kisse and adore his feete, and laying the holy Scripture at his feete. And when he celebrateth the Masse, his Chaplaines use a great deale more reverence and ceremony about his person, than they doe about the Altar and Hoast: with an infinite number of other things, proper to the sonne of perdition, described by S. *Paul*, and by other Scriptures; which to shunne tediousnesse, I passe by, remitting the Reader to those who have expresly and amply written on this subject.

CHAP.

Chap. XVI.

The ſumme and concluſion of the former Diſcourſe, concerning the uſurped Primacy and infallibilitie of the Pope.

YOu have ſeen (good Reader) how I have clearly ſhewed, that the Romiſh Church which maketh the primacie and infallibilitie an Article of faith, ſet down eſpecially in the Confeſſion of faith of the Councell of *Trent*, can produce no paſſage of holy Scripture that proveth it with the leaſt ground or reaſon; you have ſeen how I (not being obliged to prove the negative by Scripture) have notwithſtanding by the ſame word of God ſhewed cleerly enough, that Chriſt Jeſus had never intention to give that primacy to S. *Peter*, as the Apoſtles did never beleeve nor acknowledge it, and that S. *Peter* himſelf did never think it, nor make uſe of it; and conſequently, that it is falſly attributed to the Biſhop of *Rome*, although he were ſucceſſour to S. *Peter* in the Biſhoprick of *Rome*, (which is a great controverſie.)

You have alſo ſeen that the Biſhop of *Rome* was never called nor acknowledged for head of the Church, or univerſall Paſtor, the firſt 300. yeers without controverſie, yea for almoſt 500. yeers (which is a very great and long time) and further, that he never aſſumed, but rather rejected that title as wicked, damnable, and arrogant, and proper to Antichriſt, never uſing that Authority.

It hath been ſhewed you how this uſurpation was brought in, and how it hath been maintained, in what caſe it may be in at this preſent, and by what unjuſt and tyrannicall means that unlawfull Authoritie reigneth in the world, to the great prejudice of Princes, and oppreſſion of Prelates, and to the great ſcandall and hurt of all poore and ſimple Chriſtians.

Lift up therefore the eyes of your underſtandings, and conclude with me, that this power being uſurped, is unlawfull and void, (as it appeareth) is in vain, and without reaſon ſaid to be the rule of faith, that it appropriateth to it ſelf the infallible explication of the holy Scripture, and the priviledge to declare the Articles of faith.

It is in vain then that it ſendeth us to its Synods and Councels, which preſume to have no authority but from him who hath none

himself, neither to call nor confirm them, and all the Canons that were ever made under that unlawfull authoritie, have neither force nor vertue, neither can they oblige any Christians.

All the Canons and Constitutions therefore established and confirmed by the Popes of Rome and their Councels, are of no force nor strength; neither can they oblige any man.

Therefore all the Excommunications and Anathema's, all the commandments and prohibitions issuing and coming from such an Authority, which are numberlesse, ought to be rejected and set at naught, (if they have no other authoritie from the Word of God) as void and unlawfull, and cruell burthens laid on mens shoulders to hold them in slaverie, as those of the Pharisees condemned and accursed by God himself.

Compare, I pray you (courteous Reader) the Commandments of God with those of the Church and Pope, and you shall see that
Mat. 11. 30. the Commandments of God are easie, and his yoke is light, (as he hath said) and that the commandments of the Church which the Pope affirmeth to be of equall authoritie with Gods, are insupportable burthens, and cords to strangle the consciences, and snares to precipitate them into hell: Open therefore your eyes, O ye people, and behold your blindnesse and the captivitie in which
Isa. 52.2. ye live so miserable; *Loose the chains from off thy necke, poore slave, and captive daughter of Sion*, may I say unto you with *Isaiah*.

I know that many Bishops and Prelates, men of great learning and honest conversation, yea the most part of the Prelates of the Romish Church, mourn and groan under the weight of that yoke, and wish nothing more than the happy occasion to see themselves delivered, complaining often amongst themselves, and making their complaints resound in the eares of their trusty friends; I know assuredly (as having heard it from their mouthes) that they are of the opinion of the ancient Bishops, that the Apostles were equals according to the testimonie of the Scriptures, and that the Bishop of *Rome* is no more than their equall, their fellow Bishop and brother; not their superiour, although one of the greatest amongst them; because of the greatnesse of the City of *Rome* where he resideth, as they of the first ages did esteeme: I know they see and acknowledge that it is nothing but an usurpation begun by the liberality of great Princes, and brought in by the ambition of the Popes, and the indiscretion of the wicked Empereour, maintained by force during the weaknesse and calamities of the

the Emperours, and the dissention and division of States, and yet continue at this present by unlawfull policies and courses, under the bountie of soveraigne Monarchs who suffer it.

All the learnedst and most judicious of the Romish Church see and deplore this miserie and tyranny; but to open their mouth aloud and in publique, is a thing which none dare attempt under the Popes authoritie; for besides the excommunications and Anathema's which will not be wanting to terrifie the simpler, besides the prisons and other corporall punishments where the Inquisition reigneth; they must expect (where the Pope hath any credit with Princes) to be quickly deprived of all the Church Revenues they possesse, and out of hope to get any more; which verily are too strong motives to retain many, who have not sufficient courage, and who by pusillanimity, and those temporall respects, are forced to keep silence, and yeeld as *dumbe dogs which dare not barke*, seeing the woolfe fall upon the flock, as saith *Isaiah*. Isa. 56. 10.

Would to God Princes would once rellish this important truth, which a great many of their ablest Subjects do acknowledge, and open their eyes to see the captivitie under which they go about to oppresse their authoritie; God of heaven make them see their servitude, and give them resolution to deliver themselves and their Subjects from under that strange and cruell yoke.

I am perswaded if once this great abuse were out of the Church, if this unjust and incompetent Judge were once rejected, as an usurper of an authority not belonging to him, all Christians would in a short time be of one flock, and under one Pastor Christ Jesus; and in a short time there would be through all *Europe*, and other places of the earth, but one faith, one baptisme, one God; for the holy Scriptures entring to be Judge and Rule of all controversies in point of Religion, there would be no man of spirit and judgement who would not in a short time know the truth, and the darknesse of error would quickly be dissipated by the approach of the light.

But from this incompetent Judge doth proceed all the miserie of the Church, and because that point is the most important of all others in controversie, I have stayed longest upon it, and laboured to deduce and cleer the same more amply, as being that whereupon I did most ground my conversion, and the change which I have made.

And because I know there be yet many points, which for not being

being sufficiently cleered, are the cause of the perdition of many, I shall endeavour to speak something of them in the following Chapters, according to the light God hath given me, and the knowledge I did acquire being in the Romish Church: not that I promise to set them down so amply as I have done the precedent points; For having proved evidently that rejecting the judgement of the Pope as unlawfull, and of no force, we ought to take the Scriptures and Word of God alone, to judge all our controversies in matter of faith; all, that cannot be shewed in the holy Scriptures must be banished out of our beleef: and because they of the Romish Church confesse, that in many points they have no Scripture nor ground, it is by consequence to avow and confesse the nullitie thereof; neither need we any other form of processe to condemne them of untruth, so that which I shall write hereafter shall onely be for the greater satisfaction of the Reader, and to open the eyes of many simple souls who see not their blindnesse and darknesse.

CHAP. XVII.

Of the Invocation of Saints.

AFter that I was sufficiently informed, and fully satisfied, by those reasons and considerations I have already deduced, and others like to them, which to avoid prolixity I omitted, that neither the Pope nor the Church ought to be my Judge in matter of faith, but the holy Scripture onely, which God hath given us to that end; then did I begin to examine all points of faith by the Scripture alone, and in every thing that was propounded to me by the Romish Church I had recourse to the Word of God, and holy writings, to see if it was conformable to them; and if any such thing were preached by Christ and his Apostles, who have questionlesse divulged the pure and most perfect faith, that being the thing every Christian ought to practise in matter of faith.

And perceiving the point of the Invocation of Saints to be at this present in great estimation in the Romish Church, and that the confession and profession of faith ordered by the Bull of Pope *Pius* the fourth, according to the Councell of *Trent*, saith expresly, we must honour and invoke the Saints: I have searched and examined this point by the holy Scriptures.

I confesse truly that as my nature moveth me enough (praised be God) to give honour to those to whom it appertaineth, especially in holy things, so have I ever had an inclination to render to the Saints, as much honour and respect, as I thought was due to them; and if I should have found any ground in the holy Scripture for the Invocation of Saints, I would certainly have embraced it with a hearty affection; but knowing that God is better pleased with obedience than will-sacrifice, so I did beleeve the Saints demanded nothing more of us than what was due to them, and that we are so far from doing them pleasure in giving them more honour than justly appertains to them, that it were rather to offend God, and them in God, who loving him above all things have no other glory nor pleasure than his glory and will.

Now for passages out of the holy Scriptures to prove this Article, the Romanists produce none worthy of consideration; and that which ever I did read of greatest importance for them, is the passage in 2 *Pet.* 1. 15. (*Moreover I will endeavour that you may be able after my decease to have those things alwayes in remembrance.*) Thereby (say they) *Peter* promiseth the faithfull that he will pray for them after his death. 2 Pet. 1. 15.

This passage is falsified, for it is according to the Greek, *I will endeavour that you may be able after my decease to have those things still in remembrance*: that is, as *Aquinas* himself (who is esteemed Mr. of the Schoole) explaineth; because (saith he) I must shortly be dissolved; therefore so long as I live, I will take pains to advertise you not onely once, but often, that is, instantly and diligently, that you may remember those things I told you after my death. *Oecumenius* also acknowledgeth this explanation to be the best, and the other to be hyperbolicall, that is, troubling and overturning the construction. *Theod. Aquin. in Comm. super Epist.*

And although we should confesse, that by this passage is proved that S. *Peter* and the other Saints pray in Paradise for the faithfull, it will not thence follow that they hear us, and that we must call upon them, nor can they produce any proofe out of Scripture.

The Jesuite *Cotton* also in his first book of his Institution in the Chapter of the Invocation of Saints, saith, that for commandment to pray and call upon the Saints, the Church hath never taught any: nevertheless the confession of faith of the Councell of *Trent* (composed and formed to be received of Christians by com- *Cotton Instit. lib. 1. cap. de Invoc. Sanct.*

mand of the ſame Councell, and eſpecially by Pope *Pius* the 4th.) hath thoſe words, (*I beleeve the Saints muſt be honoured and invocated, who reign together with Chriſt, and that they offer up prayers to God for us.*) Thence it would appeare that this good Father did not well know his belief; for behold, his Church beleeveth that Saints muſt be honoured and invocated; if it be not peradventure that he would put this gloſſe upon the words of the Councell, to wit, that the obligation is onely by way of counſell, and not a commandment; but they might ſay as much of all hereſie, and the word (*I beleeve*) ſheweth they make an Article of faith of it, which obligeth them all.

Concil. Triden. Seſſio 25. de Reform. cap. 20.

But let us grant, if you will, that all the Saints who are with God in glory offer continuall prayers to him for the increaſe and proſperitie of the whole Church and all the faithful, (as ſome Doctors beleeve:) and perhaps might be granted, although we have no knowledge thereof from the holy Scripture, (and ſo it cannot be a point of faith;) it will not therefore follow that they hear all our prayers, and know our neceſſities in particular, or that we ought to invoke them; and the faſhion in which the Romiſh Church explaineth this point, ſheweth ſufficiently its nullity.

For they ſay the Saints do not hear our prayers themſelves, but beholding and contemplating the divine Eſſence, they ſee them there as in a glaſſe, and ſo have knowledge of them; and although (ſay they) they ſee whole God, yet they do not ſee him wholly, nor do they ſee all which is comprehended in that divine Eſſence, for ſo ſhould they have an infinite knowledge; but they ſee onely that which God will manifeſt and reveal unto them.

Now to beleeve God manifeſted unto them all the prayers that are directed unto them, is a groundleſſe conjecture, there being no Word of God to inform us thereof, nor any returned from thoſe places to bring us news. And although this might be, there being nothing impoſſible to God, nevertheleſſe all confeſſe and agree, that every thing which is poſſible to God cometh not therefore to paſſe, nor ought we beleeve it to be done, if the Word of God declareth it not to us as matter of faith; beſides there are ſo great abſurdities in the explication of this doctrine, that I marvell how it can enter into the ſpirit of a reaſonable man.

For they confeſſe that our prayers go firſt to God, and then from God to the Saints, and after they return from the Saints to God, which is as one praying to S^t. *Nicholas* (for example)

God

God ſay to him, *Nicholas* know that ſuch a man in ſuch a place upon the earth asketh thee ſuch things, whereof I advertiſe thee, that thou may pray to me, and then I will adviſe if I ſhall heare thee, that is, to make God Mediatour towards the Saints, before the Saints be Mediatours towards God.

Furthermore, the Saints have not an infinite knowledge and vertue, and as they know not all things, ſo doe they not know them all at one time, and are not as God, who provideth for the generall government of the world, and all particular things therein, without any trouble or diſturbance; for the infiniteneſſe of his divine eſſence giveth him that power; but the Saints are not ſo; for although their power be great, yet it hath its owne bounds; nor I cannot conceive how a Saint at the ſame inſtant can heare all the prayers made to him here on earth, nor how he can provide for all, as they make the ſimpler beleeve.

For let us ſuppoſe (if yee will) that it is Saterday, which day the Romaniſts dedicate eſpecially to the bleſſed Virgin, Mother of God; or one of her great holy dayes among them; as of her Nativitie, her Aſſumption, or any other, from the dawning of the day to mid-day, there are a million of millions of Maſſes ſaid every moment in thoſe places where Popiſh Religion is planted, and a numberleſſe number of prayers at one and the ſame inſtant are directed to the bleſſed Virgin, every particular perſon imagining ſhee heareth them perfectly, and indeavouring to make his wants knowne to her, to the end he may be relieved; or ſuppoſe ſhee knoweth them already, and that they onely labour to pray to her and aske her helpe and reliefe; they will be forced to confeſſe that the prayers and neceſſities of every particular perſon goe firſt to God, who alone knoweth the hearts, and then from God to the Virgin, and from her againe to God; laſt of all they returne from God to the Virgin, that ſhee may give order and make them feele their prayers are granted, if God think it expedient. Now if there be two thouſand perſons in a Church that pray to the Virgin at one time, it muſt be done by every one of them in an inſtant; and if there be ten thouſand in a Citie which pray at one time, that muſt be done by every one of them ſo; and if that be done proportionably through all the Cities of a Kingdome, even of many Kingdomes, where a numberleſſe number of people pray to the bleſſed Virgin at the ſame inſtant, ſhee muſt have at one time an infinite multitude of buſineſſes to heare, and neceſſities to provide for,

for, and at the ſame inſtant God informeth her of an infinite number of prayers directed to her for an infinite number of wants, ſhee returning an infinite number at the ſame time to God; and in the meane time, while ſhee returneth them to God, and prayeth to him, according to the information it pleaſed him to give her, God at the ſame inſtant advertiſeth her of an infinite multitude of other prayers; which indeed may well be done by God at an inſtant, but not by the Virgin *Mary*, who being onely a finite creature, is not able to thinke and adviſe upon ſo many affaires together at one time no more than we; but needeth ſome time and ſucceſſion to know & provide for all, though we confeſſe, that a ſeparated ſoule may know ſooner than united to the body, and that ſhee know by a ſingle apprehenſion and not by diſcourſe; but being finite, her power of knowing is finite, and ſhee cannot know all together, nor thinke upon all at once, being ever in ſtate of glory.

And let us but grant the leaſt time to every buſineſſe, we would quickly be far from our intent; for there being ſome dayes millions of millions of affaires and prayers directed to her through the world, ſhee cannot imploy the ſmalleſt time imaginable in every buſineſſe, but ſhee muſt be more than a yeare to thinke and look upon all the affaires which are directed to her in one day, nay in one houre, nay in a quarter of an houre. And becauſe it falleth out often in a yeare, we muſt of neceſſitie fall into an inexplicable labyrinth to every tongue, inconceivable to every underſtanding, and impoſſible to every creature, how perfect ſoever ſhee is, then being nothing but that which is infinite capable of ſuch things, the which ought not to be acknowledged in any Saint whatſoever.

But to what purpoſe (I pray you) ſhall we addreſſe our ſelves to Saints? ſeeing we have our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who is the true Mediatour, the Soveraigne and onely Advocate betwixt us and his Father, who commandeth us to come and addreſſe our ſelves unto him, who giveth us the confidence, and aſſureth us that he will comfort us; *Come unto me* (ſaith he) *all yee that are weary and heavie laden, and I will eaſe you*; He ſaith not goe to *Moſes*, or to *Abraham*, or have you recourſe to *Jacob*, but come to me all both poore and rich, men and women, whoſoever yee be, how great ſinners ſoever; all yee that are weary with any griefe or affliction, for any diſeaſe or any affaires whatſoever, and I will comfort you; and

Mat. 11. 28.

be assured yee shall finde consolation. Is there any Saint in the world, to whom we have so great reason to addresse our selves, as to Jesus Christ our God? who ever hath commanded and provoked us to come to him? who hath called and charged us? who hath ever said come to me? who hath given us so great confidence? and to whom ought we to beleeve, and to trust so much? is there any Saint so able to assist us? and who can comfort us so much in all our afflictions, and heale us so well of our diseases? or so quickly and powerfully helpe us in all our crosses as he? Is there any Saint that hath assured us so much of his good will towards us? Is there any Saint in whom and on whom we can trust and repose our selves so freely? To what purpose then should we goe and addresse our selves rather to the Saints, than to him who is our God and omnipotent Father, and who infinitely desireth our welfare.

It is easie by that which I have said, and which I am to say, to answer the objection Papists commonly have and imagine to be strong, drawne from the comparison of Princes and Mediatours, which men use to goe to them, and to doe their businesse the better; for it is not so in God; we goe not directly to Princes either because they know us not, or because we are not sure of their affection towards us, or if they be minded to doe us good; but this hath no place in God; for we are certaine he loveth us, and desireth and willeth our good; it is moreover his will, and he commandeth us to come to him; so we have no need to interpose others; and having no commandement to doe it, nor example in holy Scripture, nor any reason in the world, we cannot doe it without offence.

And we need not doubt but the Apostles had a sufficient inclination to honour the Saints which were before them; yet we see not in any place of Scripture, that ever any of the Apostles did invoke any of the Saints, either before or after the death of our Saviour; or that he ever recommended that doctrine: if this had been an Article of faith, and of so great importance, doe yee not thinke they would have left something of it in some one of their Epistles or *S. Luke* in the Acts? which no where appearing, it is a manifest signe Christ Jesus did never teach it, and that it was never his will we should practice it.

Now if our Saviour hath not recommended it, nor the Apostles taught it, and if further it appeare they never practised it, upon

what reaſon and ground ought we to doe it? Shall we thinke our ſelves wiſer than Chriſt and his Apoſtles? and doth it not appeare to be a humane invention and addition to the Word of God? which is curſed from his mouth, and threatned with an Anathema by the Apoſtle S^t *Paul*.

Beſides, if we interpoſe Chriſt, who is our true and ſoveraigne Mediatour, is there any that can deny that our prayers are not as well and better made, as if we did interpoſe all the Saints: to what purpoſe is it then to interpoſe S^t *Pachomius*, S^t *Paphnutius*, S^t *Anthony*, S^te *Thereſias*, S^t *John Gualbert*, and the like, rather than Chriſt Jeſus, and leave him to goe to Saints, which are nothing in compariſon of him.

And there is no man who would not confeſſe, but it is better to pray to God and to Jeſus Chriſt, than to the Saints, and addreſſe our ſelves to him rather than to them; becauſe wee have a commandement for the one and not for the other. Seeing then it is better to addreſſe our ſelves to God than to the Saints, we having no commandement nor counſell in the holy Scripture, nor any example in the lives of the Apoſtles, who were better Chriſtians than wee, and who had a greater inclination and affection than wee to honour the Saints; with what reaſon ſhould wee doe it? We ought therefore to reject this as a humane invention, and a ſuperſtition invented by the Romiſh Church, and which is threatned with Anathema.

CHAP. XVIII.

That Profit temporall is the cauſe of the Invocation of Saints and Images in the Romiſh Church.

AS it is manifeſt that the Romiſh Church is wholy builded upon utilitie and profit, ſo is gaine and lucre the principall cauſe of the article of the invocation of Saints and images; for when the Clergie did perceive that the people (commonly inclined to ſuperſtition) uſing to paſſe many nights at the Sepulchres and Tombes of the Martyrs in faſting and prayers, praying and bleſſing God for their conſtancy, did begin to pray to them upon the aſſurance of their felicitie, and hope that their ſoules being immortall might heare them, and have credit enough with God to helpe

helpe them, and charitie ſufficient to imploy themſelves for them; they did not reprove them for this ſuperſtition, but were glad to finde out theſe means, and uſe the occaſion to draw profit therefrom.

Thence came to paſſe, that the Prieſts did reſolve to place the Images of ſuch Saints and Martyrs in their Temples, although they were not buried there, to the end the people relinquiſhing the Tombes and Sepulchres where their bodies did reſt, might come ſee and pray to them repreſented in their Churches; and ſo comming to make their prayers, might leave ſome offering, imagining well they would not returne without ſhewing their liberalities in favour of the Saint, but where the Prieſt & the keeper of the Saint ſhould ever have the beſt part.

And that abuſe in ſhort time grew to ſuch a diſorder, that every Prieſt laboured in emulation one of another, to place the moſt Images of Saints, as was poſſible in his Church, eſpecially to ſet up thoſe the people moſt eſteemed, and to which they came moſt willingly and furtheſt; ſo that in the end many Temples are become true Pantheons, there being no corner where ſome big or ſmall Saint had not place; and I have ſeene in ſome Churches where for want of place to erect all their Images in Boſſe, their Pictures were confuſedly drawne one by another; as the 15000 Virgins are, ſhewing onely their faces; to the end that whatſoever Saints the people deſired to adore and pray to, they might be found in their Temples.

And when they perceived ſome Saints to be more prayed to, and in greater requeſt than others, they were not content onely to ſet their Images in the Churches, to dedicate and conſecrate Temples to them: but the avarice of Prieſts hath invented fraternities and Congregations in their honour, which bearing their name, profeſſe themſelves chiefly affected and devoted to thoſe Saints; and to combate and live under their aſſiſtance and protection; theſe congregations and fraternities being often erected in emulation one of another, and alwayes to the utilitie of the Clergie, which can well make profit thereof.

But as all things have their time, ſo have the Saints had theirs in eſtimation & honour in the Romiſh Church; and the Apoſtles and auncient Martyrs, whom they had in great veneration and eſteeme in old time, at this time have loſt almoſt all their credit among them, there being few that pray (in private eſpecially)

to S^t *John* the Baptiſt, S^t *Matthew*, S^t *Luke*, S^t *Peter*, and S^t *Paul* and others of the moſt renowned among the Saints; and for the holy Patriarchs of the old Teſtament, as *Abraham*, *Iſaac*, *Jacob*, *Job* and *David*, whoſe faith and vertue are recommended by the holy Scriptures, which giveth us a moſt ſure teſtimony of their beatitude and ſanctitie; and of whom Chriſt and his Apoſtles have ſpoken ſo much good; have never had the happineſſe (for any thing that can be perceived) to have been in veneration and honour in the Romiſh Church; nor had never any candles offered them; but they eſpecially which have had much honour and reputation amongſt them, have been and are yet ſome new Saints, canonized by the Pope alone, without any other certaine revelation and teſtimony of the Word of God; and to them doe they pray and honour them more than all the Apoſtles of Chriſt Jeſus together, and all the Patriarchs that ever were; as if they had not ſo much power and credit with God, and were not ſo great Saints in Paradiſe, as thoſe which are canonized by the Pope.

But I would willingly demand how the Pope can aſſure us of the felicitie of another, being not certaine of his owne? and ſome Pope is ſaid to have canonized Saints, whom they of the Romiſh Church thinke damned for his execrable life and death; and he may have canonized a man who is now in hell: Notwithſtanding ſuch is the abuſe, that they whom the Pope hath declared Saints are in greater eſtimation, than thoſe of whoſe ſanctitie we are aſſured by the holy Scripture, and that man would be derided now who ſhould ſay, S^t *Abraham*, S^t *Iſaac*, S^t *Jacob* pray for me, or ſet their portraicts or images in the Churches to be adored, or erect ſome fraternitie or congregation in honour of them.

But all the devotion *a la mode* is onely towards ſome Saints of a new ſtamp, & the virgin *Mary*, who alone hath more Maſſes, prayers, Chappels, and fraternities erected in her honour, than all the perſons of the moſt holy Trinitie have together; and for one Maſſe, one Congregation or prayer to the holy Trinitie, there are an hundred to the Virgin *Mary*; to whom they pray oftner without all compariſon than to God, giving her more honour than God; which certainly is a great offence, not onely to God, but alſo to her, who queſtionleſſe abhorreth and deteſteth all thoſe honours which ſhee knoweth to be due not to her but to her God ſhee having no other honour nor conſolation, than to ſee her God and Son honoured, to whom alone all honour and glory doth appertaine, (as witneſſeth the Apoſtle *Paul*.)

1 Tim. 6. 16.

And nevertheleſſe, it is the trade and cuſtome of the Romiſh Church, never almoſt to pray to God, but to the Virgin *Mary*; to make no more vowes to God, but to the Virgin, and the *Pater-noſter*, which is the prayer the Son of God taught us to pray when wee are to pray, is little in uſe for the preſent; but onely prayers to the Virgin, and to Saints; and on the beads, for one *Pater-noſter*, there be alwayes ten *Avemaria's*; and when the Bell toulleth in the morning, at noone, or at night, there is no prayer ſaid to God, but to the virgin *Mary*; and the Preachers at their Sermons ſay never the *Pater-noſter*, but the *Ave maria*, and the *ſancta*; and he who in place of *Ave maria* ſhould ſay the *Pater-noſter*, and for praying to the virgin *Mary*, ſhould pray to God, and ſay the Lords Prayer, would be reprehended and cenſured, as having a bad opinion of the faith.

Now what is all this (I pray you) but errour, ſuperſtition and Idolatry? and to give greater honour and glory to the Saints than to God? to the creatures, than to the creatour? and have the virgin *Mary* and the Saints in greater eſtimation than our Lord Jeſus himſelfe, our perfect Mediatour, Advocate, and Interceſſour, ſo eſtabliſhed for us by the teſtimony of the Scriptures, to reconcile us to God, to entercede for us with God, and appeaſe God his Father for us. And what is all this (I pray you) but to make void the will of God, to follow the inventions of men, and to expoſe themſelves to the condemnation pronounced from Gods owne mouth againſt that in S^t *Mat.* 15. 3. and in an number of other places. *Mat.* 15. 3.

Now for the adoration the Romiſh Church giveth to Saints and Images, although (it may be) the moſt underſtanding and learned of that Church adore them not as God; and that by the diſtinction of adoration of *Dulia* and *Hyperdulia*, they thinke to exempt themſelves from Idolatry; or if they were content to keepe their pictures in their houſes, as they doe thoſe of the *Ceſars*, or other excellent perſonages, without exhibiting to them any religious adoration, that might be tolerated; but expoſing thoſe images to the people, and ſetting them in the Churches to be adored, they are the cauſes (at leaſt) the people commit Idolatry towards Saints and Images; for they adore the Saints, and pray to them, and ſpeak to Images as to God; demand health and remedy from the Saints and Images as from God; and if the Images be onely drawne on Tables, they make not ſo much account of them; but

if they be in Boſſe, and well made, they ſpeake to them, as if they were alive, and carry themſelves altogether towards them, as did the Idolaters towards their Idolls. See what is ſaid in the Booke of *Wiſdome*, which is holden to be Canonicall among them, and judge you if all doth not agree to the moſt part of people in that Church.

Sap. 13. 15. In the thirteenth Chapter, verſe fifteenth, it is ſaid, ſpeaking of Idolls and the Images of the Gods; *He will make a convenient habitation for it, ſet it in a wall, and make it faſt with Iron; for he provideth for it, that it may not fall; knowing that it is unable to helpe it ſelfe; for it is an Image, and hath need of helpe; Then maketh he his Prayers for his goods, his wife and children, and is not aſhamed to ſpeak to that which hath no life; for health he calleth upon that which is weake; for life prayeth to that which is dead; for ayde humbly beſeecheth that which hath leaſt means to helpe; and for a good journey he asketh of that which cannot ſet a foot forward; and for gaining and getting and for good ſucceſſe at his hands, asketh abilitie to doe of him that is* Sap. 14. 1. *moſt unable to doe any thing. Againe, in preparing himſelfe to ſaile, and about to paſſe through the raging waves, calleth upon a piece of wood, more rotten than the veſſell that carrieth him; for verily deſire of gaine deviſed that, and the workman built it by his skill.*

Judge I pray you, if all this doth not agree, and is not found in the ſimple people of the Romiſh Church; and if there be not as great reaſon to condemne them of Idolatry, as thoſe of whom it is ſpoken in this place; and are not they which place thoſe Images and expoſe them to the people, which authoriſe them by their doctrines, and ſollicite the people thereunto, the cauſers and protectors of Idolatry? But as the Booke of *Wiſdome* ſaith in that place; *The deſire of gaine hath deviſed that*; for it eſpecially hath been the onely covetouſneſſe of Prieſts and Clergie to gaine and gather the money and offerings of the people, which hath made them expoſe the Images and erect them in the Churches: there being many of thoſe Images worth great revenues to the Clergie; and I know ſome worth above ten thouſand Crownes yearely to their Prieſts; and therefore we need not marvell that the Romiſh Clergie, ſo carefully maintaine the doctrine of invocation of Saints and Images.

For as the people goe but ſeldome to God but by the Saints, ſo doe they but ſeldome goe to the Saints but by the Prieſts, to wit, by their Maſſes, Pilgrimages, and other the like means; and how-

ſoever

ſoever the ſaints in heaven take no money for their paines, they having no need, they nevertheleſſe which are on the earth can well take it, refuſing nothing although they have no hands; but the Prieſts have hands enough for all; for, they take that which is offered them with one hand, & with the other that which is offered to their Images; ſo they handſomely take (as men commonly ſay) two maulters of one ſack; and know how to flea the poore beaſt without noiſe; caring little whether the people commit Idolatry or not, provided they find their profit.

And howſoever the Prieſts know well enough, that the people commit idolatry with the Saints and Images in rendring to them the honour that is due to God, nevertheleſſe that doctrine being ſo profitable to them, they are loath to preach againſt it or reprove it.

And as a notable and very learned Biſhop of the Romiſh Church who is yet alive, and whom I well know, (a man unblameable in his converſation) did begin not long ago eagerly to preach and write againſt thoſe great abuſes, againſt the congregations and Tiercers, againſt pilgrimages, and thoſe artificiall ſuperſtitions, and the Idolatries practiſed by the ignorant with vitious ſimplicities, and invented of purpoſe by the Prieſts to ſnatch mens money; thoſe who were the more interreſſed, roſe up againſt him incontinent, and prevailed ſo far by their practiſes with the greateſt, that he was forbidden to preach and write, and hath been diſgraced and baniſhed theſe many yeers; although he was eſteemed for that of the moſt judicious, and even of them who did ſolicite againſt him; but profit and gain ſuffocate and ſtrangle oftentimes the reaſon and truth, eſpecially in the Romiſh Church.

CHAP. XIX.

Of the Miracles of the Romiſh Church.

THe ſtrongeſt reaſon they of the Romiſh Church have to authoriſe their invocation of Saints, is an infinite multitude of Miracles, which they ſay were done by the Saints at the prayers of the faithfull; and the book of their miracles is of ſuch credit at this day in that Church, that it is their Word of God and holy Scripture, and the book in greateſt eſtimation among the people; and

and where ſcarcely one Bible is to be found in an whole Pariſh, an hundred books of the life and miracles of Saints are to be ſeen.

Truly for my part, I once accounted of them as other men did, and becauſe there was many ſtrange accidents ſurpaſſing the force of nature, I took great pleaſure in reading thoſe hiſtories; for it is naturall to our ſpirits to be delighted with things which are not common: thence cometh it to paſſe, that there are but few that are not delighted with the reading of Romans, although they know them to be fabulous, and things invented of purpoſe to paſſe idle time; but when I came to ſound and examine the manner in which thoſe things were left unto us, I found there was but ſmall reaſon to brag of thoſe miracles, or oppoſe them to the Word of God, and practiſe of the Apoſtles, and firſt Chriſtians: for there is none but they know that thoſe books of the Saints, and eſpecially that which is moſt eſteemed at this preſent, and called the flowers of the Saints, compoſed by *Ribadeneyra* a *Spaniſh* Jeſuite, hath been extracted out of the ancient Legends and lives of the Saints; in which the moſt judicious of the *Romiſh* Church (as the Cardinall *Baronius*, and others) acknowledge ſo many abſurdities and lies, that they are aſhamed to hold them for authentique; ſuch is the *Tripartite Hiſtory*, *Metaphraſtus*, *Nicephorus*, *The life of the ancient Fathers and Hermites*, attributed to S^t. *Jerome*, who never dreamed of it, *The golden Legend*, and many others of the ſame kind; where it is certain the lives of many Saints are, which were never in the world: Notwithſtanding the Moderns have not neglected to take out of all thoſe books the things which ſeemed to them leaſt abſurd, and they thought eaſieſt to be beleeved; and ſo have left it to the world, not with more truth, but with more likelihood of truth.

But I would willingly ask them, who told them that thoſe things which they have pickt out of thoſe ancient books and old Legends eſteemed to be Apocrypha, are truer than the things they have left behind? For they were not preſent to know it, and all things which might have come to paſſe and been done, are not therefore come to paſſe; and if any Authors have written of them, they have taken them one from another, as divers Writers do.

So truly all thoſe Authors old and moderne, do not deliver them as holy Scripture, or things certain and infallible; and the more judicious through all ages have never given great credit thereto:

thereto: Notwithſtanding becauſe many Authors are cited in them, who write thoſe things which indeed they have never ſeen, but read or learned from their predeceſſours, or found in ſome Manuſcripts, wherein were written many lies and falſe hiſtories, to make them more plauſible, to the end they might ſell better to the people: and to make them the more credible they write them often under the name of ſome dead Saint, or ſome grave Author who had been famous; and the ſimpler (which make profeſſion to beleeve all that is moulded or printed, eſpecially being dazled with the name of ſo many Authors, whereof ſome were accounted Saints) receive that as Goſpel, firmly beleeving the ſame; but not the more judicious and wiſer amongſt them.

And as for Miracles, I am not inclined to incredulitie, but I am of ſo eaſie beleeſe in the point as a Chriſtian ought to do; and I know and confeſſe, that God being almightie, both can work them when it pleaſeth him, and by whom it pleaſeth him, both by ſinners and Saints, by Infidels and beleevers; and I know and confeſſe, that many miracles have been done by the ſaints in vertue of Gods name, who onely can work miracles, and that they may be wrought yet every day; and it is credible they are wrought in ſome place, (Gods hand being nothing ſhortned) but miracles are neither infallible marks of the true Church, nor of the true doctrine; God being able to do them (as I have ſaid) by Infidels and Devils.

And as for the Miracles which the Romiſh Church pretend, and whereof they make ſo great boaſt and noiſe in the eares of the ſimpler, I could never find any ſufficient reaſon to move me to beleeve them; although I have been often very curious, diligently to enquire after the ſame with all poſſible ſinceritie.

But for my part, I profeſſe firſt of all, never to have ſeen any in any place whereſoever I have been; and moreover, that I never did meet with any man for the ſpace of 30. yeers and more, that I lived in the Romiſh Church, who could aſſure me he had ſeen any, although I have been in a great number of Churches and places where the people ſaid many miracles were wrought; and where the Prieſts did keep great books ſtuffed with an infinite number of Miracles; and when I was deſirous particularly to know the truth of ſome of them, whereof they made ſo great noiſe, I found it was onely deceits to beguile the ſimpler, and draw more people after them, not to honour God or the Saints

with their prayers, but to burthen the Priests and Clergy with offerings and presents out of their purses, for that is the end of the mysterie.

I will onely hereupon give you this brief history. When I di remain in a sea-town famous enough, there was a Pastor of my ac quaintance an ingenuous man, and much given to his profit, wh perceiving that his Church which was dedicated to the Virgi *Mary*, was not so much frequented as some other Churches were and as he desired; he bethought himself of this project and design to wit, some simple women passing once by the way coming t his Church, he made them beleeve that the Virgin *Mary* ha newly appeared to him, and told him she would be singularl worshipped in his Church; and that whosoever should visit it times (mark the subtiltie) besides a multitude of benefits he shoul receive every time, it should be as profitable to him as if he wer to see our Dame *de Liesse*, which was above an hundred miles di stant, and might acquit himself from the vow of going thither; bu to assure you that he spake this in formall or obscure and enig matique tearmes, I will not affirm it; but howsoever he persua ded them in such sort, that they came immediately to the Tow where I lived, publishing the Miracle in every place; that the vir gin *Mary* was appeard to that Pastour, and had held such di course with him.

So that the report of this new miracle being divulged abroa the people, especially women and maids, went running in such throng from the Town to that Church in pilgrimage (it bei distant about six miles) that there passed no day wherein man hundreds went not, even to such excesse, that the Pastour of t Town, a man zealous and jealous of his charge, did ordinarily complain in publique that his Parish was deserted, Gods servic neglected, and the women and maidens were in danger to tur whores, they not being able to gain their living in so running to and down; In a word, that it was the deceit of the devil; yet wo not all his exhortations sufficient to hinder the streame and cu rent of that unreasonable multitude.

And after the example of this famous Town the neighbouri Towns throng thither also; and the matter went so far, that l lesse than three yeers, nay than two, the people came thirtie o fourty miles off thither in procession; and mark that none return eth back without leaving some feather of their wings; for that

the ground and end of the invention; ſome for confeſſion, others for Maſſes, ſome for Evangils and prayers, ſaid over their heads, others for wax and light, ſome to clothe the Image, and for an infinite number of other uſes which want not ſpeciall and religious pretexts, whereof the honeſt Prieſt maketh every where his profit; for although he be not able to do all alone, yet they whom he admitteth to help him, and have ſome part of the ſpoil, muſt often greaſe his fingers, and give him ſome acknowledgement, otherwayes he would be diſcontented, and weary to ſuffer them: there is cunning every where.

And I being once there, I was very curious to enquire of my friend the Prieſt, the truth of that Miracle which was ſo much ſpoken of far and neer, and as I did ask him what the matter was; he began to ſmile, and told me he knew not what it meant, and that the report was but a meer foolery; but ſuch an anſwer was not for every one; he being wiſe enough for his own profit not to diſcover himſelf ſo cleerly to all men: but he knew that I would not be contented with equivocations, nor enigmatique anſwers as many others, and that I was of a profeſſion to keep all ſecret.

And notwithſtanding for all that, the fame of that falſe revelation continueth yet at this day, and will continue from father to ſon, and thoſe that will come after us will write it as an Article of faith. And whatſoever they did talk of an infinite number of other miracles which were ſaid to be done in that Church, yet could I never learn ſo much as one; and when I have inquired, I found nothing but a falſe rumour of the people, nothing true; I mean true miracles, and not cures of Fevers, or the like accidents, which nature it ſelf with Gods concurring or aſſiſtance may do.

Nevertheleſſe many go thither thronging, as they do likewiſe in a number of ſuch places, on holy dayes and Sundayes, idle and working dayes; ſo that all the neighbouring Prieſts complain as did that other, that their Churches were deſerted, that there is no body in their Temples to aſſiſt at the Divine Service, to hear the Sermons; but that under the falſe bruit of thoſe Miracles, and under pretext of that indiſcreet devotion, the people do nothing but run up and down looſing their time and money, and bring themſelves in danger to ſtarve or ſteal, that they may live the reſt of the week, beſides a number of diſorders committed by the way, many young folks being glad of this occaſion to make acquaintance, men and women being often obliged to be pell mell

together, both by the way and in the Inne for want of roome, women return back with their purſes emptied, and their bellies filled with ſome other thing than wind; and all they do there, is to hear a ſhort Maſſe in great confuſion, rub their beads against the Image, and receive in haſte ſome ſmall ſuffrages for their money, and ſee and hear a great diſorder throughout the Church, because of the preſſe of the people; and thoſe who gain moſt there are the Prieſts and the Devils.

As I remained in another Town bigger than the former, there was a child of twelve yeers of age, who had his ſinews ſo contracted and drawn in, that he could not walk but crookedly, and leaning upon his hands and knees, and was foure yeers in that manner, after which time a Gentlewoman of qualitie who had ſome skill in Phyſick, did undertake to cure him: and while he was in her hands for ſome weeks, his parents carried him to a famous Church, dedicated to the Virgin *Mary*, where being come at the earneſt ſollicitation of his parents, he conſtrained himſelf to walk, and indeed did walk a little, and then did they cry out, a Miracle, beleeving their child was healed by a meer Miracle, which the honeſt Gentlewoman did contradict, maintaining that it was by her induſtrie and remedie: But ſhe was commanded by the Prieſts to keep ſilence, ſaying, that it was to deny the Virgin the glory due unto her, and that ſhe did not well; but becauſe the child did not walk firmly, but as if he were tottering, and very weakly, and as one whoſe ſinews were not as yet ſufficiently ſtrengthened, (as I did ſee with my eyes, and as it happened to thoſe who are cured by the Art of Phyſick,) it was a very ſtrong proof to all men of good underſtanding, that that cure had been done rather by remedies, than by miracles, which notwithſtanding was publiſhed in every place for moſt certain, and beleeved by thoſe who did not underſtand the circumſtances. I have heard ſpeaking, and had knowledge of a number of cures which the people did eſteeme Miracles, they being done beyond the hope of the Phyſitians, and the appearances of nature; but if all that falleth out ſo, ought to paſſe for a Miracle, there are an infinite number of the like done every day, both with and without prayers, both amongſt Chriſtians and Infidels; nature working often by wayes unknown to us, God permitting and ſo diſpoſing.

But thoſe who are born blind, to recover ſight; and the dead to be raiſed, and ſuch like, is not done nor heard of now adayes; but

those who come after us shall find enough wherewith to fill their books, as many Writers in our time, in the times past, and as they have done at all times in the Romish Church.

And concerning the dead which are raised, I have but this one word to say; to wit, that there being hundreds, yea and thousands who are said in the Legends to have been resuscitated at divers times, and by divers Saints, there is nothing seen nor found of all the said dead, or written after they were raised; and I marvell that men did not carefully gather all the news they might have brought from the other world where they had been, and how they did live after; For my part, if I knew a man who were raised 200. Leagues hence, I think I would willingly go thither to see him, and to learn something from him of that which he had known and done from the time of his death, to his resurrection; and if a man should carry him through the world as they do Monsters and rare things, I suppose he would gain more monies, than did ever any man hitherto with any other thing: But we must say either our forefathers have not bethought themselves of that as now they might do, or rather they are but all fables: and except those who have been raised by Christ, and his Apostles, and which are mentioned in the holy Scripture, I see not sufficient ground to beleeve so much as one.

And although there is no miracle now seen amongst us; yet there is no famous Church wherein they do not often publish some; and there is no Religion and Order, that doth not daily represent to the people some new Images of Saints, who are or have lived (as they say) not long ago in their Monasteries, and do many miracles, which in truth have never been done, or otherwayes are not miracles, but notwithstanding shall be written for Miracles by the posteritie.

I being the last yeare in close prison above eleven moneths together, where I had no other company but two little tame doves, which seemed to be given to me of God for my consolation and recreation in the affliction wherein I was for the confession of his name and of the truth, and besides some few Popish Bookes; there I chanced to reade (amongst others) a certain *English* Authour called (as I remember) *Ordericus Vitalis* a benedictine Monke, who lived about *S. Bernards* time, a man zealous of the welfare and honour of his order, and writ the history of his owne age and the two proceedings; there he makes mention of a multitude of able

men, and who were thought to be very holy in those ages, and were afterwards canonized, especially of S^t *Bernard*, whom he had seen and knowne, and S^t *Anselme* Archb. of *Canterbury*, who was dead a little before, and in whose Monastery he had lived, and of others the like: but he speaketh not of one Miracle; which he would not questionlesse have omitted, if he had knowne any; for it was his speciall intent and inclination; and he complaineth extreamly and was sorry he found none to write. Nevertheless, those who lived after, have been abler and sharper-sighted than he was; for they have discovered them by hundreds afar of, where he who was in the place and living at that time could not see nor finde one onely; so may we say of all the rest, and although there be none in our time, yet they who shall come after us and write after the manner of the Romish Church, will finde a great number.

I have knowne a great many (of religious persons especially) who at this present have the opinion to be holy, and some of them to worke miracles, & to have wrought in their life time; although I did never heare of it, so long as they were alive, and now they begin to adore their Images; some of them indeed were men who lived without scandall, and in reputation of godlinesse; but they were also said to have their owne imperfections, as others; and I have knowne a multitude of secular persons, whom I beleeve to have been no lesse holy, & more perfect than they. And I may boldly affirme, as having known it by long experience, and heard it an hundred times from the most judicious and best among the religious, that if there be any vertue in the Romish Church, it is (beyond all comparison) more among the Laicks and secular persons, than in the religious orders and Cloysters, for there is much hypocrisie among them, and more exteriour shew and appearance, to guide the opinion of men, and be esteemed holy, than of interiour and care to please and be agreeable to God, (God not blessing those humane inventions.)

And yet secular persons do but seldome possesse that favour amongst the people, as to have Images, and be accounted holy and blessed, because their parents finding not so great profit to make them passe for Saints, or blessed men, as doe the religious orders; they care not so much, for except (it may be) a little honour to their families, there is nothing but great charges and expences to them.

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But there is no Saint nor miracle beleeved or esteemed among the religious orders, which bringeth them not great profit, and abundance of Almes; because they well know, that the more they are accounted holy, the more are the people inclined to doe them good, in hope of their prayers, and to participate of their merits, as they often tell them; and if there were no gaine to be made by exposing of Saints and Miracles to the people, there would not be so many seen in the Romish Church, but the profit is worth the paines.

And the better to colour their mystery, they make Princes and Kings speake as being intrest in the glory of the Saint. Besides, this being not done without great charges and much money, which they must give to the Popes Commissaries and Officers, they labour to ingage them, that they may have the helpe of their purses. Thence cometh it to passe, that poore people who want competent meanes, or have not so easie accesse to great ones, as the religious orders, may never pretend to be adored for Saints, and canonized in the Church of Rome, whatsoever vertue or perfection they may have; but there be few of the moderne Saints, who are not of those Orders, and there is no Order that hath not a great number, and exposeth not every day new ones; for that trade is very profitable, and the invention gainfull.

And if those of the Romish Church brag so much of their Miracles, which they say are so easily and often done, I marvell much they chase not the devills out of the bodies of a number of persons, who (as they say) are so long time afflicted and possessed; that would be great charitie, and that onely were capable to canonize them during their life, and make them passe for Saints before the people, although it be easie to use imposture therein; there (they say) hath been a great number in our dayes (whether by Sorcery or otherwise, I leave that to others) where the Romanists may have faire occasion, for the fiction is easie there, and the devill doth his best to authorise the lye. Now I know that those who are esteemed most holy in the Romish Church, have been sent thither even by the Princes command, and have tryed all their faith, merits, fastings, austerities, reliques, blessed beads, prayers and exorcismes; yet there is none can say, they have been delivered by them.

But I have seene that after a great many had been much troubled with a certaine Wench that was possessed (whom I knew)

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to deliver her, at last a certaine Monke of a certain order, (whom I also knew) bethought himselfe to take her in pilgrimage of seven or eight dayes Journey, to a certaine Church, where many demoniacks were to have been healed in old times; but he returned her with the Devill in her body, and a little Monk in her belly, which shee got of him by the way. I have knowne a multitude of such like accidents, which I might set downe, but I choose rather to passe them over with silence.

Now a thing which seemed most miraculous to me of all that I did see in the Romish Church, was certaine companies and fraternities of people, who have not their name from any Saint, but from charitie, whose profession is to bury the dead, yea even those who dye of the Plague; and yet doe they not contract any evill themselves, nor those who frequent them: and I verily beleeve this cannot be done without some particular assistance and preservation from the bounty of God, that blesseth this good worke. But the Romish Church hath no reason to glorifie and prefer it selfe to others for it, because that is also done in this Kingdome, and in the reformed Churches of other Kingdoms, even with a better successe; for not onely they who have care of the body, but I have even seen those who have onely a care of their soules, and who are ordained to minister spirituall comfort and assistance to them in their sickneſſe, render them freely that service, without catching any evill or danger, either for themselves or those who are conversant with them; where of an hundred that I have seen imployed in that Charge in the Romish Church, I have not knowne ten that escaped, although they ever lived sequestred from all conversation and commerce with the whole.

But if we must acknowledge a Miracle, it is the delivery which it hath pleased God of his mercy to worke for me, not onely in bringing me out of the errour and abuse wherein I was, but also out of straight prison, into which I was brought by the onely perfidy and treason of my owne brethren; for, being detained there under five locked doores, some of them halfe a foot thicke, barred and boulted strongly, all the windows grated after the same fashion, and watched so carefull, that I could neither write nor speake to any, but to my Keeper, who was forbidden to have any discourse with me, except for necessary things, and was chosen to that from among five hundred for the great trust they reposed in him, but not so much as to entrust him with the key of my inner-

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moſt dore, which for greater ſecuritie was kept under two other locks, and given to another in cuſtody, who was commanded to carry them about him day and night, ſo that (to ſpeak in worldly appearance) there was no hope of my deliverance; but having called on God, and put my whole confidence in him, he moved the heart of my Keeper in ſuch manner, that he not onely reſolved to leave the errour of the Romiſh Church, after my example and perſwaſion, but even expoſing himſelfe to all danger, to ſet me at libertie, he had by Gods favour the induſtry to come by the key, which was ſo carefully locked up, without any noiſe, or appearance of opening; and our good God gave us the grace to elude all their purſuing of us, (even with royall Authoritie) and to paſſe through the midſt of them that purſued us, and even among my own brethren without being perceived; and however, they thought they had ſtopped all the Ports and paſſages for us, nevertheleſſe, to eſcape by that onely which was moſt convenient and ready for us, and where (I may ſay) the onely providence of God towards us blinded them, they ſhould not miſtruſt, that he might ſave his poore ſervants, who had no other hope but in his bountie. And in this (doubtleſſe) we muſt confeſſe that God is marveilous in his wayes, and that there is even no wiſdome, councell, nor power againſt the Lord; and if I muſt acknowledge any miracles, this may be ſaid to be one wrought by God towards me, rather than thoſe of the Romiſh Church.

If we muſt acknowledge any miracles in our ages; the marvellous deliverance of this Kingdom in the dayes of Queen *Elizabeth* in the yeer 1588, when the Pope having ſhared in half with the King of *Spaine*, to make up that Navie, which they tearmed Invincible, to ſeize on this State, all their enterpriſes were brought to confuſion, without doing an exploit, and that more by ſtorms and Armes from Heaven, than by thoſe of men; this ſhould be called a Miracle. And the diſcoverie of that damnable Powder-plot to King *James* in his time, being the yeer 1605. wherein the Enemies of the truth thought to deſtroy all the glory and Nobles of this Kingdome in a moment; may be called a Miracle. And the victory obtained 1639. by the *Hollanders* againſt the *Spaniards* on theſe Coaſts, where nine or ten ſmall Ships cauſed ſuch terrour and confuſion, and were the occaſion of the utter ruine to a terrible and eſpouventable Navy, conſiſting at leaſt of threeſcore and ten ſaile of ſtrong Ships well armed; and brought all their unjuſt

deſignes to naught; this might be held a Miracle.

And if we muſt acknowledge Miracles, the diſcovery of the conſpiracy and confuſion projected the laſt Spring, the yeare 1641. againſt the tranquillity and repoſe of thoſe Kingdomes, ought to be holden for a Miracle.

And the agreement ſo quickly made betwixt the two Kingdomes of *England* and *Scotland*, which the laſt yeare 1640. ſome helliſh firebrands and agents of the ſpirit of diſcord, would have ſet on fire the one againſt the other, to bring this whole State to confuſion and ruine, which God hath turned to the confuſion of the Authors, and good of his people; this may be ſaid to be a remarkable Miracle.

And if we muſt cry out Miracles, that which is fallen out this preſent moneth of *October* (at the writing of this) in *Scotland*, where divers of the greateſt of the Nobility were neare to be maſſacred, whereby the Enemies of peace thought yet againe to bring this State into confuſion, if God by his ordinary goodneſſe had not ſhewed himſelfe at this time againe the God and protectour of his people; ought to be eſteemed a Miracle.

And if all the miraculous deliverances which have been wrought by the bounty and mercy of God in this Iſland, ſince it received the faith and puritie of the Word of God, had falne out in *Spaine*, or in ſome other place under the Popes Juriſdiction, they would have eſteemed them as great Miracles as the deliverance of the *Iſraelites* out of the captivitie of Egypt under the leading of *Moſes*, or *Joſuahs* victories by his battels, or *Sampſons* with the Jaw-bone of an Aſſe over the *Philiſtims*, or *Davids* over *Goliah*, or *Judith* over *Holophernes*, and the like; and they would write and publiſh them as evident miracles. It is true alſo, and we ought to acknowledge Gods power doth clearly appeare therein; and we muſt not beleeve that thoſe deliverances are fallen out by accident & chance, but confeſſe that the bountie of God would therein ſhew the care and affection he had for the conſervation & protection of this his poore people, whom it ſeemeth he hath choſen and held in theſe ages for his peculiar heritage among all Kingdomes. And I marvell the enemies of the truth and of this State, open not their eyes to ſee thoſe ſo marveilous protections, and that they have hardned themſelves ſo often againſt the manifeſt hand of God.

But this ſufficeth, if thoſe of the Romiſh Church have no ſtronger proofes to maintaine their invocation of Saints, than the mi-

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racles wherewith their Books are ſtuffed, that will ſerve to deceive the ſimple; but men of underſtanding wil not be ſatisfied with that; and I thinke it is out of queſtion better to addreſſe our ſelves to God through Jeſus Chriſt, who is our onely ſure Mediator, as he commandeth us, and as the Apoſtles have done themſelves and taught us to doe; than to interpoſe all the Saints, as the Romiſh Church telleth us, without any word of God, nay, contrary to the word of God, which condemneth with Anathema thoſe who ſhall preach to us or teach us any other wayes, beſides that which hath been preached to us by Chriſt and his Apoſtles.

CHAP. XX.

Of the holy Sacrament of the Lords Supper, and the Communion under both kindes.

I Have ever had thoſe words of S. *Paul* in great eſtimation, by which he forbiddeth us to be wiſer than we ought; *Let no man* (ſaith he) *thinke of himſelfe more highly than he ought to thinke, but to thinke ſoberly*: And I have often marveiled that the Romiſh Church bragging that ſhee accompliſheth the Counſells of Chriſt, which ſhee holdeth for works of ſupererogation, and wherefore ſhee thinketh God much obliged to her, deſpiſe in the meane time the commandements of our Saviour, and alienate her ſelfe ſo far from his inſtitution and intention. For my part, I beleeve the excellency and perfection of a good Chriſtian, of perfect faith and of the true Church, doth conſiſt in approaching as neere as may be to the intention and inſtitution of Chriſt, and in indeavouring to do as he hath done, and as it hath been his will to ſhew us; and in ſo far as we can conforme our ſelves to his actions, eſpecially in the reception and adminiſtration of the Sacraments; for he is come to be our Maſter, and being the infallible Wiſdome, he hath done and taught us all was needfull. Rom. 12. 3.

The Romiſh Church findeth fault with the Euchariſt, for being called the Sacrament of the Supper, and calleth it the Sacrament of the Altar. Now it is certaine that our Saviour inſtituted this Sacrament immediately after Supper, wherefore it may juſtly be called the Sacaament of the Supper, as it was for a long time in the Church of Rome: Even to this preſent they call it the day of its

inſtitution, the fifth *feria* in the Lords Supper, *Feria quinta in cœna Domini*; and that notable Bull, wherein are excommunicated and delivered to the power of the Devill, all the Princes, Parliaments, and Courts of Juſtice, yea and the moſt part of Chriſtians in the world, and which is read ſo ſolemnly every yeare at *Rome* on thurſday of the holy weeke, is called the Bull in the Lords Supper, *Bulla in cœna Domini*; and when Chriſt inſtituted that holy Sacrament, it is certaine that was not on an Altar, but on the ſame Table whereon he had ſupped; and none of the Evangeliſts make mention here of an Altar; ſo there is no reaſon it ſhould be called the Sacrament of the Altar, but the Sacrament of the Supper, or if you will, of the Lords Table, or of the Communion, or of the Euchariſt; which words agree all with the inſtitution of our Saviour, but not that of the Altar.

The greateſt controverſie in this myſtery, is not concerning the name, but the body of Chriſt, which the Romaniſts thinke they receive ſubſtantially and corporally there, and the Orthodox and reformed Church ſpiritually, ſacramentally, and figuratively, and after the ſame manner that our Saviour did receive it and give it to his Diſciples. Now there is no appearance our Saviour did eate his true and proper body; for ſo ſhould he have had his body within his body, his whole head in his mouth & in his ſtomacke, and at one time been paſſible and impaſſible; neither is there any likelihood he gave it after that manner to his Diſciples; for as it is ſaid, *Joh. 6. 63. It is the ſpirit that quickneth, the fleſh profiteth nothing*; and although we know that the whole body and perſon of the Son of God, is of an infinite merit, becauſe of the hypoſtaticall union with the Deitie; yet the Romane Doctors confeſſe ingenuouſly, and affirme with us, that it is not the corporall reception, nor to receive it corporally, that quickneth and maketh us partakers of the graces of this holy Sacrament; for ſo ſhould rats and dogs be capable as we are; but onely the ſacramentall and ſpirituall union and reception, which is by true faith and the true and ſimple love of God, under the ſignes of this holy Sacrament; and therefore I marvell they ſtammer ſo much at this, ſeeing they doe not pretend to receive more ſpirituall graces and benefits therein than they of the reformed Churches doe.

Joh. 6. 63.

For my part, I may truly ſay in this as I have already ſaid in the matter of the Saints, my inclination is very forward to render to God and the Saints, and all the myſteries of our Religion, all poſſible

poſſible honour and reſpect; and if I could acknowledge the reall and corporall preſence of my Saviour in all his Sacraments and in all the myſteries of my Religion, I would do it with all my heart; but we have rules and lawes that guide us, and to which we ought to ſubmit our ſelves, and onely looke to the will of God, his inſtitution, and holy Word; for that is the onely meaſure which ought to rule and forme our faith.

Now it is moſt evident by the Words and inſtitution of Chriſt, that he did not give his body corporally, but onely figuratively and ſpiritually under the ſubſtance and figure of bread; for ſee the words of *Matth. 26. 26. And Jeſus took bread, bleſſed it, and brake it, and gave it to his Diſciples*: There yee ſee that which he tooke was nothing but bread, and that he bleſſed the bread, which he did take, and brake it, and gave it; ſo it was but bread which he gave, for that which he tooke, and bleſſed, and broke, was but bread. Mat. 26. 26.

But yee object, that he ſaid, *This is my body*, therefore that which he gave was his body. Mat. 26. 26.

It is true, he ſaid, *This is my body*; but it is to be remarked that our Saviour ſpeaking in Hebrew (which although much mingled with the Syriaque, was yet ſo called) ſpake according to the phraſe of that tongue; now in that language, the word, *ſignifie* or *repreſent*, is not found, and in place thereof they uſed the word, *Eſt*.

So we ſee in the Hebrew old Teſtament, this word, *Eſt*, ordinarily uſed for the word, *ſignifie* or *repreſent*, as, *Gen. 40. 12. Joſeph* expounding the Dreames of the Cup-bearer and Baker of *Pharaoh*, ſaith; *The three branches are three dayes*; and in the 18 verſe; *The three baskets are three dayes*; that is, ſignifie and repreſent three dayes; and in the 41 Chap. verſ. 26. *The fat Kine and the ſeven full eares are ſeven yeares, and the ſeven evill favoured and leane Kine, and the ſeven blaſted eares, are ſeven yeares*. It is cleare then from theſe paſſages, that the word, *Eſt*, even in the Plurall number, and in diverſe Tenſes, import ſo much as *ſignifie* or *repreſent*. Gen. 40. 12. Verſ. 18. Gen. 41. 26.

Whence it is that although the Greek tongue want not words to expreſſe (ſignifie figure or repreſent) yet the Greek new Teſtament which often followeth the Hebrew phraſe, hath often *eſt* for ſignifie, as the Apoſtle *Paul*, 1 *Cor.* 10. 4. (*The ſtone was Chriſt*) and to the *Galat.* 4. 24. *the bondwoman and the free* (to wit, *Agar* and *Sarah, are the two Teſtaments.*) And *Rev.* 17. 9. *The ſeven heads are ſeven mountains, upon which the woman ſitteth*; And in verſ. 12. 1 Cor. 10. 4. Gal. 4. 24. Rev. 19. 9.

v. 18. *The ten hornes* (ARE) *ten kings*; and verſ. 18. *The woman which thou ſaweſt* (IS) *the great City.*

It being impoſſible then for our Saviour to ſay in his own language this ſignifieth or repreſenteth my body, becauſe thoſe words were not in that language, he ſpake as he could, and according to the forme of ſpeech uſed among the Jews, and familiar in holy Scripture: And the Evangeliſts knowing that Chriſt did ſpeak in that manner, have ſet it down the moſt ingeniouſly they could: ſo the Romiſh Church hath no reaſon to beleeve that to be his true body, becauſe Chriſt ſaid, (*This is my body.*)

Joh. 14. 6. Beſides, when our Saviour ſaith, St. *Joh.* 14. 6. *I am the way, the truth, and the life, I am the doore,* and the like; the Romiſh Church underſtandeth it figuratively, and by way of Allegory; why then when Chriſt hath ſaid (*This is my body*) do they not underſtand it figuratively? for it is as hard to beleeve that the bread is the bodie of Chriſt, as that he is the way, or a doore; and all that they ſay, that our Saviour did more clearly explain himſelf in thoſe other paſſages than in this; it is without reaſon or ground, but rather he hath explained himſelf more cleerly in this than the others, ſaying, (*Do this in remembrance of me*) as S. *Luke* hath it 22. 19. and as S. *Paul* explaineth it, 1 *Cor.* 11. 16.

Luk. 22. 19. 1 Cor. 11. 16. Moreover, if Chriſt had given his true body, he would have commanded his diſciples to adore it, and would have elevated it that they might have adored it; which cannot be obſerved, ſeeing they ſate ſtil at Table, which is a poſture no way fit for adoration, and they who ſhould do it now in the Romiſh Church, would be judged to be prophane and contemners of God; and this adoration would have been chiefly neceſſarie at this firſt inſtitution: and as it was impoſſible but ſome crums would fall eſpecially in breaking the bread (as Chriſt is ſaid to have done) he would ſtraightly have charged them together to gather up all the crums together diligently, not leaving any, (as they do in the Romiſh Church) for according to this opinion, Chriſt ſhould be wholly in every little crumme, as well as in the greateſt pieces; which nevertheleſſe is not to be ſeen in any place of the holy Scripture.

This is alſo proved by the words pronounced in the diſtribution of the cup; for thus S. *Matthew* hath it, 26. 27. (*and taking the cup he gave thanks, and gave it them, ſaying, Drink ye all of this, for this is the blood of the new Teſtament, which is ſhed for many for the remiſſion of ſins.*

Matth. 26. 27.

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S. *Luke* who hath written ſince hath theſe words, Chap. 22. *v.* 20. *This cup is the new Teſtament in my blood which is ſhed for you.* and likewiſe S. *Paul*, 1 *Cor.* 11. This might ſuffice to ſhew that the words of S. *Matthew* ſhould be figuratively underſtood, and in a ſignificative myſtery; for S. *Paul* and S. *Luke* having written ſince, have ſet it down after the ſame manner to cleer the myſtery; having made as it were a paraphraſe upon the words of Saint *Matthew*. Luk. 22. 20.

Now thoſe words of S. *Luke* and S. *Paul* lead ſtraight to the knowledge of the truth; for I beleeve not they can ſay that the cup is really the new Teſtament, or a covenant; for a Teſtament or a Covenant are a relation, an action, an accident, and the blood is a ſubſtance.

Moreover, a Teſtament conſiſteth in clauſes and promiſes, which can no wayes appertain to the blood of our Saviour; and there is no reaſon to call Chriſt the Teſtament, ſeeing he is the Teſtator himſelf; and if a partie contracting can be called Teſtament and Covenant, the faithfull may alſo be called the covenant; and the Prieſt making daily the blood of Jeſus Chriſt, ſhould make the covenant and Teſtament of Chriſt every day, which is eternall, and was made before the inſtitution of this myſtery. The Goſpel which is the Teſtament of the Son of God being alreadie divulged; and therefore we muſt ſay that thoſe words (*this cup is the new Teſtament in my blood*) ought to be underſtood figuratively, and in a ſignifying myſtery; and therefore you may ſee the word, *eſt*, uſed for ſignifie or repreſent even in the inſtitution of this myſtery by the Romaniſts own confeſſion; wherefore then think they it ſtrange that it is ſo uſed alſo in the diſtribution of the bread?

Furthermore, this Sacrament is called bread in a number of other places, and that even after the inſtitution of this myſterie, and Chriſt ſaith after the adminiſtration of the wine: (*Verily I ſay unto you, I will drink no more of the fruit of the Vine*) he meant then that it was wine after he had ſpoken thoſe words.

In a word, the inſtitution of Chriſt appeareth ſo clearly in this myſtery to have been onely the figure of his body and blood, that I marvell how any can doubt of it; and thoſe who deſire to be further informed upon this may read the Authors who have written of it more learnedly and copiouſly, eſpecially the books of Doctors *Peter du Moulin*, and *Andrew Rivet*, two of the moſt able

able and famous writers of this age, and who are reputed for such even by the learnedst of the Romish Church.

Now as for the distribution and communion under two kinds, it is certain that Jesus Christ gave it so, and that he gave the bread and wine together to all them that were then at Table with him: and that in them he hath commanded all Christians to do the same, by those words, (*Take and eat*) and by those other words, (*Drink ye all of this*) for they to whom he saith, *Drink ye all*, were none other but they to whom he had said, *Take and eat*: and when he said, *drink ye all*, if they to whom he spake should onely represent the Priests (as the Romanists will have) there should be none also but the Priests obliged to communicate under the element of bread; for they were none other but the same: and there is neither ground nor reason to make this distinction.

Matth. 26.26.

But if they say that the Church hath taken the cup from the people for many just reasons, and to shun a multitude of inconveniences; as because the wine might easily spill, or because it is scarce in divers places, or for the irreverence many might commit in wetting their beards in the cup, and so letting some drops of the blood of Christ hang thereon, by which means they should have the whole body of Christ hanging at their moustaches, which would be very great irreverence, and other the like frivolous and ridiculous reasons, that is to shew themselves wiser than their Master Christ, and to blame him of indiscretion, for not foreseeing all those inconveniences and disorders in instituting that holy mystery.

But our Saviour being the eternall Wisdom cannot be blamed of that vice, and well knowing and foreseeing all that was to fall out in the world through all the ages to come, all those reasons ought not to be alledged on the contrarie: but it is in a multitude of other things as well as in this, that the Church of *Rome* passeth from the institution of Christ to follow her own inventions, desiring her self to be esteemed wiser than the Wisedom it self.

Now I beleeve a Christian cannot be blamed for doing as Christ our Master hath done, and taught us by his example and words, and to imitate him as neer as can be in all his actions, and especially in the administration and reception of the Sacraments; but rather that the perfection of a Christian life and doctrine consisteth in following the words, and examples, and the institu-

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tion of Chriſt, and that with all poſſible exactneſſe; and ſeeing the Church of *Rome* beleeveth and confeſſeth that Chriſt hath inſtituted the holy Sacrament as it ought to be, and none can find faults with his inſtitution; wherefore do they not follow his inſtitution and example? which if they did in this and other things, they would in a ſhort time be but one fold and one Shepheard, to wit, Jeſus Chriſt; and all controverſies ſhould be quickly decided.

CHAP. XXI.

Of the Maſſe, and of Prayers in a ſtrange Tongue.

ONe of the things of greateſt importance at this day in the Romiſh Church, is the Maſſe which the people be commanded to hear wholly, on the Sundayes and holidayes, under the pain of eternall damnation, and are exhorted to hear it every day, for which ſo many rich Altars are erected; for which ſo great diverſity of ornaments of ſilke and embroiderie loaded with gold and pearl, and for which they have ſuch a huge number of utenſils, of incenſe diſhes, of candleſticks, lamps, and moveables of gold and ſilver, that to ſpeak the truth, it is a thing very pleaſant to the eye, and very capable to draw approbation and applauſe from thoſe who have no other reaſon but ſence; but in matter of Sacraments and divine myſteries, men ought not to ſtay upon humane inventions proper for recreation and delight, as may be done in Tragedies and Comedies, and in worldly magnificences and pomps of this world; but they ought onely to look to the divine intention and inſtitution, and ſeek more after the happineſſe and ſalvation of the ſoul, than the contentment and pleaſure of the ſence.

And howſoever the Popiſh Doctors preach to the ſimpler, that Chriſt and his Apoſtles did ſay Maſſe, and write in the Indexes of their Bibles, and contents of Chapters, the Maſſe proved in theſe places where Chriſt inſtituted the Sacrament of his Supper; if they mean that, to communicate in both kinds is to ſay and ſing the Maſſe; I confeſſe truly that Chriſt and his Apoſtles did ſing Maſſe, and that the faithfull communicating and participating of the Sacrament after this manner, ſay Maſſe.

But if by the Maſſe they meane to make a ſacrifice upon an Al-

ter covered with three Table-clothes, with so many prayers before and after in a strange tongue, and unknown to the people, with so many Ceremonies and lifting up of their hands and eyes, with stretching abroad and folding of their armes, fingers, hands, and body, with so many crossings upward and downward, on the right hand and on the left; on the bread, the wine, the corporall, the Altar, the forehead, breast, and mouth of the Priest, and where the Priest communicateth ordinarily alone and almost everie day, and the people (for a long time) onely once a yeer; for my part after I had read again and again the holy Scriptures, I could never find any such thing, or any thing like to it; and so, it must of necessitie be confessed to be a humane invention for the end which I shall quickly shew you, and no Divine institution nor Invention.

Neither can they in reason alledge here the Apostolicall Tradition, and derived from Jesus Christ and his Apostles, although there is nothing expressed in the holy Scripture, nor any written word; for if that mystery were of such importance (as the Papists would have it at this day) it would have been so also in the time of the Apostles who should have had a perfect knowledge thereof, it being a doctrine they should have much preached to the people as a thing of exceeding great importance; and they being men of excellent devotion, and incomparable zeal for the mysteries of faith, they should every day, or at least often, have said Masse, and exhorted the people earnestly to be present, and hear the same as they do in the Church of *Rome*: now there appeareth nothing at all of this in the holy Scripture.

S^t. *Paul* indeed speaketh to us (especially once) of the Sacrament, of the Supper, and of the preparations wherewith we ought to come to it. Furthermore we see that the Apostles and primitive Christians did conveene sometimes about Easter to break bread, and participate of that divine mystery together, but in no other place is there any mention made of the masse in the Romish fashion, nor of any sacrifice without blood (as they tearme it) which I exhort all the Romanists diligently to consider as I have done; and I perswade my self they will no more find it there, than I; Neither will they find any where, that the bread of the Supper was an host, or a round cake, or that they kept it in the Temples with so great ceremony and care in Tabernacles, and rich cabins, as they now do in the Romish Churches: and I believe no other thing

thing can be concluded, but that the Romiſh Church thinketh her ſelf wiſer than Chriſt and his Apoſtles, in obtruding for an Article of faith a doctrine which was never left by Chriſt, and which was neither preached, written, nor practiſed by the Apoſtles; for although they had ſpoken nothing in their Epiſtles, yet *Luke* who did write all that he could ſee and learn of their actions, would not have omitted this which is eſteemed of ſo great importance in the Church of *Rome*.

So it is clearly to be ſeen in the Hiſtories, that it is an invention of the Popes, who have from time to time added to it, every one of them according to his fancy, to day one ceremony and prayer, to morrow another; now one ornament and veſture, and then another; ſometimes making it of one faſhion, ſometimes of another, till at laſt it was come to that height, wherein it is at this day in the Church of *Rome*; & it is now a ſnare to precipitate many Prieſts into the bottome of hell, for not uſing that diſpoſition which they know to be required therein; and which is the cauſe of the perdition of an infinite multitude of Chriſtians for not hearing it with that reſpect the Romiſh Church requireth, which they of that beliefe are obliged to obey, and in doing againſt their conſcience (although erroneous) they are judged culpable of ſin: and all that according to the doctrine and maximes of that Church.

Now to define properly, or deſcribe the Maſſe as it is at this preſent, I ſuppoſe I may ſay juſtly that it is a good trade inſtituted and invented by the Church of *Rome*, to nouriſh and entertain an infinite number of Prieſts, who become Prieſts principally to gain their living thereby; fit to inrich the Monaſteries and Churches, and make all the Monks live finely, and whereby the peoples purſes are emptied, and finally a Trade that ſerveth to condemne many as well as thoſe who ſay it, as of thoſe who are obliged to hear it.

This definition ſeemeth a little too rude, and at the firſt ſight ridiculous; but it is true, and the Romaniſts themſelves may confeſſe it; (if they will) for the taxes and priſes of Maſſes now adaies are for the moſt part as of bread in the Market, and he that giveth not ſo much, getteth none; and becauſe ſilver was ſcarcer in former times than now, ſo the Maſſes were not worth ſo much; and a Maſſe that will not be ſaid now for eight or ten pence, was not worth two or three pence in former times; and in many places men had more then they deſired at that rate, and becauſe all things

are dearer now than they were, ſo the maſſes are alſo.

And becauſe the religious orders who are inſatiable in wealth, and who never refuſe any wealth whenſoever it cometh, were loaded with ſo many maſſes that they could not ſay the half of them: the Pope who ſaith he hath power in heaven and earth, hath (as they ſay) of many ſmals, made one great; and of an infinite number of maſſes which were founded by particulars, he hath made but one, wherein all the benefactors are comprehended in groſſe and in generall termes; and ſo by an handſome Bull hath diſcharged them of all ſcruples, which if their founders had miſtruſted, they would have been wary to have left ſo great wealth and rents as they have done to that effect; ſo they who live at this preſent amongſt the Papiſts, are become wiſe at the coaſt of their Anceſtors, and are loath to commit any ſuch follies, and rob, and beggar their children to inrich and fatten the Monks.

But howſoever, commonly he that wants money can have no maſſes; and becauſe the Church of *Rome* holdeth maſſes to be the principall meanes to deliver a ſoul out of Purgatory, ſo there are none but poore people who are to ſtay a long time in that fire for want of money to buy maſſes as the richer ſort; and ſo to be rich is a great help in the Church of *Rome* to go ſpeedily to Paradiſe, contrary to that which Chriſt ſaid in S. *Matth.* 10. 25. that it was very hard for rich men to enter into heaven; but it is a Church and Sect wherein the whole doctrine of Chriſt is over-turned.

Matth. 10.25.

And as it is a very profitable profeſſion to ſay maſſe, ſo there is abundance that embrace it as a good Trade, and ſufficient to gain their living well; and they ſay no maſſe but when they find Merchants; and if they can have every day, they account it great profit: and he who giveth moſt ſhall firſt have the Maſſe, for ſuch is the courſe of the market: I will not ſpeak of them who being but able to ſay one maſſe a day, do nevertheleſſe promiſe the ſame to many, and take money for many; becauſe imagining it to be of infinite merit (according to the doctrine of the Romiſh Church) they beleeve that one is capable to ſatisfie for all, and is beyond compariſon of greater worth than that which is given by the altogethers but this is a myſterie which muſt not be revealed to the people, for that is againſt their intent, and if they ſhould beleeve it, they will be loath to be ſo forward to cauſe ſay ſo many maſſes (either for themſelves or for their friends deceaſed, or who are in travelling, or in neceſſitie:) notwithſtanding this is but too much practiſed in

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deceiving the ſimpler to the undoubted condemnation of many Prieſts, who ſo deceive the Merchants, who mind to deal honeſtly; though I will not ſay that is the practiſe of all.

But that hindreth not this to be true, that the Maſſe is a Trade which condemneth many Prieſts as well in that reſpect, as becauſe they beleeve they receive a Sacrament and make a ſacrifice, wherein the purity of the conſcience is declared to be altogether neceſſarie according to the Romiſh doctrine, and to which they ſee themſelves ingaged every day to gain their living, or for other ends, it is altogether to be feared, that for the moſt part they go not about it with due puritie of conſcience; and daily experience ſheweth us ſufficiently that there are too many vices and defects in the Romiſh Clergie, not to have this diſtruſt.

And it is in this manner I ſay, that the Maſſe is a trade that damneth many who ſay it, yea and many alſo who hear it; for all Chriſtians in the Romiſh Church being obliged, under the pain of mortall ſin, to hear the whole Maſſe, the Sabbaths and holy-dayes, and not onely to hear it, but to hear it with attention and devotion, without willing diſtractions, at leaſt which laſt any conſiderable time (as the third part of the maſſe, according to rules of their Caſuiſts and Doctors) this condition maketh me ſay, that of an hundred there are not ten (it may be) that fulfill this precept, and are not condemned in hearing the Maſſe, they committing mortall ſin for want of due attention; but let every one judge himſelf: it ſufficeth that I know but too well the practiſes of the Romiſh Church not to be beleeved in this point.

And to ſpeak truly, it is a lamentable thing to ſee the Romiſh Church condemne and judge with damnation they who hear not thoſe myſteries with due attention and devotion, and in the meen time that the people ſhould carry ſo little reſpect to it; that I perſwade my ſelf all thoſe who have not ſeen would hardly beleeve it; for ye ſhall not enter into any pariſh Church, nor in a great number of others, where there are any conſiderable number of people, at a great Maſſe or often other wayes, but ye ſhall ſee ſome of them laugh, others prattle & play the fool, ſome of them ſtanding, others kneeling on one knee, others ſitting after an uncivill manner, and ſome ſeeking occaſions, if not with words, at leaſt with amorous looks; in one part the dogs play, in another children crying and weeping. In a word, often ſo great noiſe and inſolence, that it ſeemeth rather to be a market-place than a Church;

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and except a few who are therefore esteemed zealots, and scrupulous, and of shallow brains, and who are mocked of others, God may well say that which is in *Isaiah* and S^t. *Marke*, *This people honoureth me with their lips:* for except (it may be) some *Pater noster* or *Ave Maria* which they will say negligently, and in haste, or a little of their beads which they will turn over for ceremony, and some adoration they give at the elevation of the hoast, all the rest is spent in discourses or idle thoughts; and this is the ordinary fashion in most places both in the countrey and in the towns, as well of the meaner people, as of the Nobles, to be present at Divine Service in the Romish Church.

Isa. 29. 19. Mark 7. 6.

Now I having often times considered with my self the cause of so great prophaneness amongst the people, and of the little attention and respect they carry to Divine Service in that Church; I beleeved that it did proceed especially from the continuall praying in publique, in a strange and unknown language to the people, and which very few understand; for howsoever I must confesse, that many of the prayers of the Romish Church are good, and all that they say is not evill and erroneous; Notwithstanding they being said in Latine, the people is not edified thereby, and not knowing that which is said they can have no devotion, nor be stirred up towards God, the Priests also singing often with their *Gregorian* notes (as they tearme them) and even ordinarily sing with such haste and anticipation one upon another, that even they who know the Latine, can understand nothing: and thence it is that not knowing what is said and sung by them, they can have no good motions thereby, and the people also for the most part reading onely prayers and psalms in Latine, it is not to be marvelled if they have not due attention, and if their minds which are not stayed by any sensible object of devotion, suffer themselves to be carried away with a thousand extravagant thoughts, and even often with actions.

Which questionlesse would neither come to passe in that manner, nor so easily, if their private and publique prayers were said in a known language, as it was certainly practised by Jesus Christ and his Apostles, and even by the first Christians; but the Church of *Rome* which esteemeth more of his own proper inventions, than of the Word of God, and divine institution, hath brought in an humane and new doctrine unto the people for the doctrine of Christ.

I know they alledge reason for it, and that they say (among others) that the mysteries ought not to be divulged to the simpler; and so the people in the Romish Church is nourished in an exceeding great ignorance; and glory therein, the Doctors maintaining them in it. But the Apostles and Christ did not so; and no man can be too much instructed or learned in the mysteries of salvation: and many moe mischiefs follow on ignorance than on knowledge; and it is certain that Christ did pray, preach, and celebrate all mysteries in the vulgar tongue which was understood of all, and no man can doubt but the Apostles did the same: what then? Will we be wiser than Jesus Christ and his Apostles? the people in those dayes was more rude, and lesse capable of mysteries than now adayes, for they were but newly come out of Paganisme or Judaisme.

CHAP. XXII.

Of Auricular Confession.

THis point of Auricular Confession is also for the present holden to be of greater importance in the Church of *Rome* than the Masse, and there is no vertue nor any other duty so much recommended at this day as a full and faithfull confession of all sins, and even a generall confession of the whole life. In a word, all the perfection and excellency of all Christian doctrine at this day in the Romish Church aimeth at that point; and although ye should give all your goods to the poore, and were the best man in the world, and indued with all the excellent parts of bounty and vertue, yet if ye confesse not often, and exactly, all your sins great and small, all the adherent circumstances which aggravate the same, and tell faithfully and punctually the number, all the rest is nothing; and without that (say they) it is impossible to be saved, or please God in any fashion, for those who have the occasion and commodity to do the same after they have sinned. *Concil. Trident. Toler. Lesl. Bonac.* and others.

To prove this doctrine which is an Article of Faith in the Church of *Rome*, they produce no passage of the Scripture that hath either force or reason; for, to alledge that of S. *James*, ch. 5. 16. (*Confesse your faults one to another, and pray one for another that ye may be healed*) is without sence or reason; because that which Iam. 5. 16.

is subjoyned (and pray one for another) sheweth cleerly, that as S. *James* recommendeth not prayer onely to the Priests, so he commandeth none to confesse their faults to the Priests alone.

For as he speaketh of a reciprocall prayer and mutual assistance, so speaketh he of a mutuall confession betwixt particulars after quarrels and offences (as the Cardinall *Caietan* confesseth and acknowledgeth well in his Commentary in this Epistle,) it is not there spoken (saith he) of a sacramentall confession, as appeareth, because he saith, *Confesse one to another*. Now the sacramentall confession is not made one to another, but to the Priests onely; but it is spoken of the confessions, by which we mutually confesse our selves to be sinners, that they may pray for us; and of the confession of faults which are done by one another to be mutually appeased and reconciled; but there is no appearance that S. *James* speaketh here of Auricular Confession, neither of confession to the Priests alone.

And although it were true, that S. *James* did speak here of the confession to Priests, it will not follow that he spake of Auricular confession, for there is great difference: and as it is very necessarie to salvation to confesse all our sins to God, and profitable to confesse our sins publiquely also, and before men in token of repentance and griefe, and to edifie our neighbours; so none can denie, that it is both profitable and good to confesse our sins to the Priest, not for any obligation they have to do it (there being no commandment or Word of God) but to discharge his conscience, and seek remedie for his imperfections, consolation in his infirmities, and counsell in the ordering of his life.

And howsoever the Priest may minister matter of comfort to a penitent and afflicted soul, upon the assurance he may give him that his sins be forgiven him, if he be truly penitent, & have a true faith in Christ; notwithstanding he ought not presume to give a formall absolution, but onely declarative or elsse deprecative; nor think to pardon sins as do the Priests of the Romish Church, there being none but God alone that can pardon sins: as *Mark*. 2. 7. but onely assure and declare that if there be true faith and repentance, there sins are remitted, or pray to God that he will remit them.

Mark 2. 7.

And as for that which was said to the Apostles by our Saviour *That whatsoever they should bind on earth should be bound in heaven, and whatsoever they should loose on earth should be loosed in heaven*

It is clear from the conſideration of the whole paſſage, that it is onely underſtood of the exteriour power of excommunication, which we ought to acknowledge in the Church, not of the power to abſolve from interiour and ſecret ſins; for, ſee the paſſage, which I exhort the Reader diligently to conſider: *If thy brother treſpaſſe againſt thee, go and tell him his fault betwixt thee and him alone: if he ſhall hear thee, thou haſt gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee two or three more, that out of the mouthes of two or three witneſſes every word may be eſtabliſhed: and if he ſhall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the Church; and if he neglect to hear the Church, let him be unto thee as a heathen man and a Publican. Verily I ſay unto you, that whatſoever ye ſhall bind on earth, ſhall be bound in heaven: and whatſoever ye ſhall looſe on earth, ſhall be looſed in heaven.* Thereby it is evident, that Chriſt meant onely to ſpeak of the band of excommunication and ejection out of the Church, and that all that the Apoſtles ſhould bind on earth with the bands of excommunication, ſhould be thought and eſteemed bound in heaven, and before God: and that which they ſhould looſe and abſolve on earth, reſtoring and reconciling them to the boſome of the Church, ſhould be holden abſolved and reſtored before God, and might partake in the prayers of the faithfull. Mat. 18. 15 &c.

Nevertheleſſe many Prieſts in the Church of *Rome* holding themſelves ſucceſſours of the Apoſtles in that, believe that from thoſe words they have power given them to abſolve from all ſins indifferently, without any reſervation, ſeeing that even the ſame words are ſaid to them, at their conſecration. But the Biſhops give their gloſſes and exceptions upon, and ſay that it is to them it belongeth, being properly and eſpecially the true ſucceſſours of the Apoſtles, and the Prieſts but by commiſſion, which they can amplifie and diminiſh at their pleaſure, in the abſolution of ſin, limiting their power in certain cauſes, and reſerving others to themſelves, forbidding the Prieſts who are under their juriſdiction to abſolve them; and the Pope who tearmeth himſelf Biſhop of Biſhops, and attributeth the whole and abſolute power of the Church to himſelf, clippeth the authoritie of the Biſhops in this, uſing them as they uſe the Prieſts, forbidding they ſhould give abſolution for every thing, but reſerve certain cauſes to himſelfe wherein he forbid them to meddle; and as the Prieſts murmure againſt the Biſhops for that, ſo do the Biſhops againſt the Pope, believing no ſin nor caſe whatſoever, to be exempted from their

jurisdiction according to the words of Christ: and thus do they agree among themselves on the explication of those words of God even in the matter of the Sacraments.

But the Pope doth not onely extend those words unto internall and externall sins, but perswading himself that it was especially said to him, *All that thou shalt bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven: and all that thou shalt loose on earth, shall be loosed.* He taketh upon him to loose the bands of oaths, loose and exempt Subjects from the subjection and fidelity they owe to their natural Princes, and children from the obedience they owe to their fathers and mothers, when they become Religious in any Monasterie; by the same authoritie they loose marriage lawfully contracted, if it be found that the husband and the wife together have presented a child to be baptized, or be allied by the confirmation; and so it seemeth that the Scripture is onely alledged by the Papists to uphold and maintain the power of the Pope.

Now what ever is the controversie among them for this passage, it sufficeth that it manifestly appeareth through the whole Scripture that Christ did never command Auricular Confession, but repentance and amendment, and that the Apostles did neither command nor practise it, which if they had done, it would questionlesse have been mentioned in the Scripture in some places of their writings, or in the History of the Acts of the Apostles; and if the confession were of such importance as they would have it in the Romish Church, the Apostles doubtlesse should have preached it, and even practised it often amongst them, confessing one to another; For all the Doctors confesse that they might commit, if not mortall, yet veniall sins; and when they did declare the faith to the faithfull, they would also have preached the sincere confession of their sins, and taught them the true manner of the same; and even to make generall confessions, as they had preached the practise and exercise of other vertues; which not being found in any part, we must conclude, that in their time confession was not in use, and that it is an humane invention, proceeding neither from Christ nor his Apostles, but instituted, established, and maintained by the Clergie for the great temporall profit they draw from it.

I say moreover, in the time of the primitive Church, Auricular confession was not in use, and was neither thought an obligation nor command, nor of such importance as it is at this present, which

which that it may be most cleerly seen, I intreat the Reader, and (especially them of the Romish Church) to see in the life of their Saints, which they hold for their Bible and holy Scripture; there let them read the life of all the Apostles and holy Martyrs, nay even of all those whom they call the Confessors of the first ages, as of S. *Augustine*, *Chrysostome*, *Athanasius*, and *Basilius*, who is esteemed to be founder of the orientall Monks, of S. *Anthony* and S. *Paul* the Hermits. Finally, of all those of the fourth, fifth, and sixth ages, yea and since, I am assured they will never find that any of those ancient Fathers did make any auricular and secret confession to the Priests. Notwithstanding they are esteemed to have been very zealous men in Christian Religion, and men of vertue and exemplary perfection, who would never have omitted it, if it had been of so great importance. See both their life and death, there is never a word spoken of Auricular confession; which if they had used, it would questionlesse have been mentioned some where, in some one of those lives, which are in great number.

And he especially who not long ago hath gathered and collected all those lives; and who hath omitted nothing which he thought might be usefull to the Romish Church, would never have left out this point, if he had found the least traces of it in any places; and I even marvell he hath not added it, as he hath done many other things of his own invention; but we must say, that either he did not bethink himself of it, or God hath not permitted it to confound this new doctrine of the Romish Church, by looking to the ancient, and the practise of those Fathers.

And mark how the same Author forgetteth not to mention this point in the times of those where he findeth it to have been used; and because that this Auricular confession hath been in greater estimation within this short time than ever before, so there is no Saint in those last ages in whose life there is not very speciall mention made of their frequent confessions, and their sincerity therein; but in the lives of the ancients there is no mention made of it at all.

Moreover, I marvelled often that there was no more spoken of it in the books of the ancient Fathers; Turn over, I pray you, *Augustine*, *Irenæus*, *Theodoret*, *Chrysostome*, and *Cyprian*, and see if there be any thing spoken of Auricular confession to the Priests; it may be they speak of some exomologese and confession, but that was publike and not secret confession to the Church for satisfaction

faction and edification, and not secret and Auricular confession to the Priests for sacramentall Absolution.

Remarke also if yee finde in any place of them any examination of the conscience, with which all the Books of this time are filled in the Church of *Rome*; see if any of them hath written any cases of conscience, to teach the manner of confession, as we see a great multitude in our dayes; there yee will finde no such things: and is it not a strong proofe, if it be not found in those Fathers, that Auricular confession was not in use in those dayes; for they being so godly men, and the most famous of their ages, they would often questionlesse have used it and recommended it to others; and it is not credible they would have composed so big volumes without making cleare mention in some place, nay, even in many places of that which is esteemed so necessary a Sacrament, and of so great importance.

Furthermore, Yee will find in the Book of the lives of the Saints, and in the History of the ancient Hermits, attributed to S. *Jerome*, how those Ancients were sometimes, nay, even often and in many places of *Ægypt* foure or five thousand Hermits or Cenobites, or more, under one Superiour & Master, accustoming themselves to the singing of Psalmes, reading and meditation of the holy Scripture (for it was not as yet forbidden in those times:) and to work with their owne hands and bodyes to winne their livings, and be burdensome to none (as S. *Paul* did;) and commonly there was but one Priest for that great multitude, who often did not live amongst them, but came to see them every Sabbath, to celebrate divine Service unto them.

Now there is no appearance that the confession was in use in those times, for one or two Priests would not suffice to confesse often so great a number, and though a man should doe no other thing in a fortnight, he were not able to confesse two thousand: And those Books of their lives make no mention that they called their Priests to confesse them, even when they were neere to death; but that they did prepare themselves for that passage by the meditation and reading of the holy Scriptures, and often hearing and reciting of Psalmes.

And there were even many amongst them, if that Author speaketh truth, who were for ten or twelve yeares, or more, inclosed in little chambers of purpose, and sequestred from all humane conversation, without seeing or speaking to any, and often dying alone.

If

If in those dayes the confession had been holden for a necessary Sacrament, men would have judged that to be a diabolicall illusion and deceit, as they would now doe in the Church of *Rome*, if there were any found, who to follow his private devotions should leave off the whole way and practise of confession. I intreat the Reader in the Romish Church, to consider this well, and if he doubt I speake not the truth, that he would take the paines to see those Books, and ruminate the matter.

Now all that sheweth most cleerly, as I suppose, that the doctrine of Auricular confession, holden to be of so great importance at this day in the Church of *Rome*, is not a doctrine derived from Jesus Christ nor his Apostles, nor yet practised by them, nor used among the Saints and Christians of the first ages, but a doctrine invented not long agoe by the Pope and the Clergie of *Rome*, for the great temporall profits it bringeth to the Priests; for, of all the Sacraments of the Church, there is none of so great worth to the Priests, as that of the confession.

And although there be some who take no money in confessing; that nevertheless, is onely to refuse a little fish for a big one, and the gratifications they receive from their penitents (especially of the female sex) recompence fully all their paines, those who use that trade, and who are acquainted with their practises know well enough how profitable this mystery is to the Priests; and it sufficeth to tell you that a man who can but handsomely handle the consciences and the spirituall of men, can but easily dispose of all their temporallities, and the gold and silver which is found with many confessours after their death, and the abundance of all things during their life, and so many sumptuous Monasteries newly erected in many Cities, and so many costly ornaments, and so great riches and wealth, which are to be seene in many of them, are (for the most part) the effects of the sole Auricular confession, and it is thought that it is at this present (at least) as profitable to the Clergie, as the doctrine of Purgatory or Invocation of Saints is or ever was, this being even the *Primum mobile*, which moveth all the rest.

And they who doe professe it, and know the worth of it, would not leave it off for any thing, and therefore labour to maintaine it by all meanes whatsoever; and that even in despite of the Bishops, who would faine hinder the Fryars from using it, thinking themselves sufficient and capable enough alone with their Priests to go-

verne their flocke, without those auxiliary troopes which the Pope sendeth them against their will, and which take all the fat and fish of the flocke, whereof Christ hath given them the full charge, but God so permit, that having left the true doctrine of Christ, they are confounded and troubled in the use and practise of their owne proper inventions.

I remember that a man of great note amongst the Clergy, told me some while agoe at *London*, that many of the Clergie in *England*, knowing the utilitie and profits the Confession might bring them, were sorry that morsell should have escaped out of their hands, and that they would quickly set it up againe if it were in their power. I know not if he judged others by himselfe or not, nevertheless, I beleeved at that time with many he was not much inclined to Papistry, and now I have much reason to be otherwise conceited of him, and not I alone, but to satisfie such men (if yet any such be, which God forbid) I will tell them that as the confession bringeth great profit to some particular and private Priests, it draweth also after it insupportable inconveniences and incommodities to the Pastours and Generall of the Church, for, the confession is growne at this day to such excesse in the Church of *Rome* by the perswasions and exhortations of the Preachers, that as the Pastours in former times did move the people thereunto both by themselves and others, they are now constrained to divert them at this present, becaufe where there is but a reasonable number of people, this exercise is inconsistent with all other offices and services in the Church, and it is impossible that the Priests and penitents can discharge themselves faithfully, even according to the Rules of the Romish Church.

For where there is (for example) 4000 Communicants in a Parish (as there are many if the most part) which will confesse themselves at some great feast, as at Christmasse, or Whitsontide, or one of the feasts of the Virgin *Mary*, to which they have so much exhorted the people, that now it is become customary unto them, and he that doth it not, is in a manner not holden to be a Christian. Every Priest is not able to confesse fiftie in a morning, though he should labour from five of the clocke in the morning till midday without any intermission; so that there must be above twenty Priests to confesse a thousand in a forenoone, and above foreie for two thousand, and yet all must be done post-haft (as they say) and doe no other thing; and what good can one doe in so ticklesome

a buſineſſe in ſuch precipitation. In the meane time, who ſhall ſay all the Maſſes which muſt be ſaid aloud and with low voice, and who ſhall helpe to ſing and ſay the divine office, the Mattins and other Canonicall offices, as the cuſtome is in the Church of Rome, and who ſhall preach and perfect the reſt of the Service which the day and the publique require, and what ſhall be done where there are not ſo many Prieſts, two or three hundred being ſufficient to cauſe a great trouble.

Beſides, when there is a great feaſt, the throng is ſo great almoſt in every place, that it will be one mornings worke onely to waite his turne, for to ſay two or three words in the Prieſts eare in great haſte; and that often putteth all the families to trouble and diſcord, for, the Miſtris is angry with the maide for ſtaying too long, and the husband againſt his wife; and if they be both there together, the children and the whole houſhold are in confuſion.

Obſerve alſo that there are few others but women that will waite upon this weariſome and troubleſome devotion, for, the men, (eſpecially the wiſer ſort) not beleeving it ſo eaſily, and remarking ſo many things which offend their ſpirits, leave the practiſe to their wives, which being naturally inclined to prate and diſcharge their ſpleene, and diſcover their ſecrets, are glad of this occaſion to tell all their buſineſſes, and often thoſe of their neighbours, and declare their griefe to a man whom they thinke obliged to keep all ſecret; and therefore we muſt not marvell if we ſee the women ſo much inclined to it; and the Prieſts knowing them to be more tractable, and conſequently more liberall than men, labour to keepe them in thoſe exerciſes, what ever diſorders or diſcontentments may fall out from their husbands. But finally, there is no man of ſpirit who will not confeſſe that Chriſt and his Apoſtles have done wiſely, in having not inſtituted this fine myſterie.

The Biſhops alſo themſelves and other Paſtours, who have more intreſt to conſerve the divine ſervice in their Churches, and to have a care of the generall good, than of the profit and particular ſatiſfaction of their Prieſts, begin as much to deteſt the uſe of this confeſſion, as they did ardently preach and recommend it heretofore, for now they ſee the great diſorders and inconveniences it drawath after it, and their experience will be the cauſe they will not be ſorry to ſee all re-eſtabliſhed and reſtored to the primitive order in the time of our Saviour and his Apoſtles.

I passe over the great scandall occasioned by this confession, whereof an infinite number of Cities and places can give too manifest testimony, and which is the cause many judge well that it is surest and more profitable to discover and confesse our secrets to God alone, according to his holy will and commandements, than to Priests, to obey the precepts of the Pope; and I shall yet shew in another place, that the confession is a snare which precipitates many into hell, if the Maximes of the Romish Church be true.

CHAP. XXIII.

Of Purgatorie.

THe Church of *Rome*, which hath founded her new doctrine not upon the Word and will of Christ, but especially upon profit and greatnesse, hath not contented her selfe in stead of two Sacraments instituted by our Saviour, (to wit, Baptisme and the Lords Supper) to adde five more, whereof the Pope, the Bishops, and the Priests, can make good profit every one of them, according to his degree and charge; whether it be for the administration of them, or the dispensations, or other casuall things, which concerne them, and which fall out every foot. But shee hath yet further bethought her, to invent a Purgatory, which shee saith is a place whether the soules of the faithfull departed in Gods favour doe ordinarily goe after their death, there to be burnt and tormented many yeares, nay, even many hundreds and thousand yeares, if they be not delivered by the good works of the living, or by the prayers of good people, or by application of the overplus of the merits of Christ and the Saints, whereof the Pope calleth himselfe the sole Treasurer and Dispenser, making profession to apply them by his Jubiles and Indulgences.

So that simple people to shun that terrible fire after their death, wherewith the justest men are threatned, have often spoyled themselves and their successours of many lands and great riches, to give them to those who are reputed to be godlier than others, to oblige them to pray for them after their death, that they might not remaine so long in those paines; and if those who are alive have any affections to their parents and good friends which are dead, they often spare nothing to helpe and relieve them in this their

neceſſitie, by all the meanes which the Romiſh Church preacheth to be ſtrongeſt and of greateſt force, whereof the moſt part are in the hands and diſpoſition of the Clergie alone and the Monkes; and they tell them, if they be not helped, they muſt ſatisfie the rigour of the juſtice of God, and that they muſt pay to the laſt farthing, and be burned in a fire as hot and ſcorching as that of hell, not onely for the paines due to mortall ſins, but alſo for the leaſt veniall ſins they might have committed in their life, of which every man hath queſtionleſſe an innumerable number; and becauſe as they ſay, ready money is good phyſicke, they perſwade them not to truſt to their heires the payment of that debt, who may be diverted by the motive of avarice; but that they ſhould provide while they are alive and in health, for feare of being ſurpriſed by death, and that the candle that goeth before, giveth better light, and is more profitable; for, that is the phraſe of thoſe Ghoſt like Fathers.

This doctrine is very profitable to the Clergie, but exceeding fearfull and very terrible and ſtrange, and deſerveth well to be cleerly grounded on the Word of God to be believed.

For to ſay, that God hath ſent his Sonne into the world to ſave mankinde, and who ſhould worke an infinite price, not withſtanding, hath not been ſufficient to ſatisfie for the paines that a mortall ſin doth merit, or yet a veniall, (that I may uſe the tearme of the Papiſts) or although it hath been ſufficient enough, and that he hath teſtified that he loveth mankinde, more than doth a Father or Mother their children. Notwithſtanding, he will not apply to them a graine of his ſatisfaction *gratis*, but hath ordained a fearfull fire to burne them, and torment them after their death, though they be fully reconciled to him, and have departed in his favour, and that he eſteeme and call them his deare children; it is a thing that ought not to be beleeved by any Chriſtian, nor conceived by any man.

And is it poſſible to be beleeved that God hath promiſed Paradiſe to thoſe who ſhall ſuffer perſecution for his name and juſtice, and comfort them, who ſhall be afflicted in this world, and ſhew himſelfe to thoſe who ſhall be of a pure and cleane heart, account them bleſſed who ſhall dye in him, (that is to ſay, in his favour,) that Chriſt hath promiſed to ſay (*Come ye bleſſed of my Father, poſſeſſe the Kingdome prepared for you from the beginning of the world*) to them, who have given meat and drinke to him in his poore

when they are hungry or thirstie; and to them whom he accounteth his loving children, and that onely to satisfie the rigour of his justice, and without any hope of amendment, he will punish them after their death for many yeares, with the same paines that the Devill and the greatest enemies of his honour and glory doe suffer, except only that those shall be tormented for ever, and others shall have sometimean end, it may be after many hundreds and thousands of yeares; for they have invented yet of purpose more to terrifie the people, certaine Stories, which say that for very small sin they must burne (at least) seven yeares in Purgatory, and what can they hope for who have hundreds and millions, the frailty of man being but too great?

It is questionlesse to wrong the great mercy of God, and altogether deny his bounty; it is to derogate from the infinite merits of the bloud of Christ, it is too blasphemous against his Incarnation and passion, and the love that he hath testified unto us; it is willingly and without grounds to make soules complaine, and terrifie the consciences without subject, onely to bring profit to the Clergie; for, this is the meaning and ground of the mystery.

Now let us see if they have passages out of the holy Scripture, for a doctrine so cruell and contrary to the bounty and mercy of God, and merits of the bloud of Jesus Christ. They alledge this of S. Paul, 1 Cor. 3. 14. *If any mans worke abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any mans worke shall be burnt he shall suffer losse; but he himselfe shall be saved, yet so as by fire,* and that fire the Romish Church understandeth the Purgatory, and so concludeth that there is a Purgatory. 1 Cor. 3. 14.

I have granted that all which is in the holy Scriptures is not therefore easie to be understood, but onely that which is necessary to salvation; and this passage is one of the most obscure and difficult in the Scripture, but not necessary to salvation; and yet the Romish Church will ground an Article of faith upon it, and the most strange and terrible of all, and contrary to the bounty of God: but he who will reade the whole passage, will easily judge that it must be understood in an Allegoricall sense, and especially the word *fire*, which S. Paul addeth not, as by fire, to shew that it must be understood by similitude, saying, *He shall be saved, as by fire*, that is to say, as if he had passed through the fire, (as mens purged and purified by the fire; even as we see the precious are purged by the fire and the drosse

Now there is no reason for grounding this so important a doctrine (which is so strange and difficile to be beleeved) on such a doubtfull foundation; much lesse on metaphoricall and allegoricall, and such words; and it is evident from this passage, that the Apostle speaketh nothing that commeth neere to the doctrine of Purgatory.

But the Apostle speaketh of Pastors and Doctors, who in teaching retaine the foundation which is Christ, on whom they build wholsome and solid doctrines; which in that place he resembleth to Gold, silver, and precious stones; others build light and vaine doctrines, called in that place, Wood, hay, and stubble; and the Apostle saith, that those frivolous doctrines being tryed by the word of God, as metalls by the fire, shall not subsist, and that the work of such a Preacher shall perish, and the tryall shall make it knowne that there is no solidity; but as for the person of the Pastour, he may be saved because of the foundation Jesus Christ, which he hath holden, being notwithstanding tryed by the Word of God as by fire. So you see that we do there speak of a tryall, which is made in this life, and not after death; and also of a tryall of the doctrine and beliefe of Pastours by the holy Scriptures, and not of a torturing of soules by fire; so they have no reason to ground Purgatory on this.

I know this passage being obscure and hard, hath many divers explications; but I beleeve every man of indifferent judgement will judge this the truest and most conformable to the intention of the writer, if he will but take the paines to consider it; but how soever it being obscure, we have no reason to beleeve that the Apostle hath preached an Article of faith to us therein, which is not to be found more clearly explained in any other place of the holy Scripture; and if because there is mention made of fire in that place, the fire of Purgatory must be made good; they may produce an infinite number of passages where Purgatory may be found, because there is mention made of fire in them.

Take here another of as little strength. Our Saviour speaking in S. Matth. 12. 32. of sins against the holy Spirit, saith, *He that shall blaspheme against the holy Spirit, it shall not be forgiven him neither in this life, nor in the life to come.* This life to come (saith the Church of Rome) is properly the fire of Purgatory, and so there is Purgatory, but this doctrine doth not even agree with that they teach of their Purgatory, for they said the sins be forgiven before they

Matth. 12. 32.

enter into Purgatory, and that none go thither who are not received in favour with God; and so according to them, no sin is pardoned in Purgatory.

Now Christ by those words, (which are also obscure and difficile to be understood) doth onely exagerate the sin against the holy Spirit, and saith, that he will not pardon it, neither in this world, nor at the day of judgement, where the second condemnation is pronounced, and so that he will punish them in this world, and after death: but there is no man who seeth not that this is too far distant from the doctrine of Purgatory, to ground an Article of faith upon it.

You see (nevertheless) the cleerest things which they produce, taken out of the Word of God to establish the Purgatory, and that so terrible doctrine; where you may perceive the small reason and little probabilitie thereof.

But behold here other far cleerer and manifest proofs drawn from the holy Scripture against Purgatory. Christ said to the theefe who implored his mercy, and put his trust in him in the time of his death, *Thou shalt be this day with me in Paradise*: that is, to say, thou shalt be this day happie with me. He sendeth him not to Purgatory, although he had been a great sinner all his life time, and that the death which he suffereth is by force, and by order of justice, and not for innocencie, as for the faith, as the Martyrs; and S. *John* saith in his first Epistle, 1. chap. 1. *The blood of Jesus Christ purgeth us from all sins*: if all sins be purged by the blood of Christ, there is no need of the fire of Purgatorie to purge them more.

Luk. 23. 43.

1. Joh. 1. 9.

And S. *Paul* to the *Colossians*, 2. 13. saith, that God forgiveth us all our offences freely; if God forgive us freely, as is evident thereby; he desireth then no more any other satisfaction on our part, nor pretendeth to punish us in satisfaction to his justice.

Col. 2. 13.

If a father correct his children, it is for their amendment, and not for his satisfaction; and can it be beleeved that God (who is so good and mercifull) doth punish his own with so cruell fires onely for his satisfaction, where there is no hopes of amendment? But if God afflict us in this world, it is for our amendment, and not to satisfie himself. And in the Epistle to the *Hebrews*, Christ hath made the purgation of sins, not out of all doubt by fire, nor by the tormenting of souls; but by his own precious blood which he hath shed for us.

Heb. 1. 3.

And in the Epistle to the *Romanes*; 8. 1. *There is no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus.* If no condemnation, then there is neither eternall nor temporall fire: And our Saviour saith, *Joh.* 5. 29. *He that heareth my word, and believeth in him that sent me, hath eternall life, and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death to life.* He saith not, from death to Purgatory; but to life eternall. Rom. 8. 1. Ioh. 5. 24.

You may see (as I suppose) the negative of Purgatory, which we are not obliged to do, more clearly proved than its affirmative, which the Church of *Rome* should not maintain without evident Scripture: But this is not all, for you shall see more yet.

In the book of *Wisdom*, 4. 7. which they hold to be Canonicall, *Though this righteous be prevented with death, yet shall he be in rest.* He findeth not him to Purgatory; there to be punished and tormented, as doth the Pope of *Rome*, that he may have occasion to imploy his Indulgences, and the prayers of the Clergie. Wis. 4. 7.

And *Revel.* 2. 10. *Continue faithfull unto the end, and I will give thee the crown of life.* And in the 14. 13. *Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord, from henceforth, yea (saith the Spirit) for they rest from their labours, and their works follow them.* Is that to rest from their labours, to enter into flaming fire, which is of the same nature with that of the damned? Is that to rest from their labours to be burnt for an hundred (or it may be) for a thousand yeers? For if they be seven yeers for one mortall sin (as they learne it) they must be very just who are there for fewer than an hundred yeers, for there are but few which commit not many sins in a yeer; and some men above five hundred; and if they die in the faith, and have repented, those are they of which S. *John* speaketh, saying, *Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord*; and therefore it is not true of them that they rest from their labours, if they go to Purgatory; but rather that they enter into new labours and torments incomparably greater and more insupportable the least quarter of an houre, than all the torments of this life: so to establish and maintain Purgatory, they must renounce the holy Scriptures, and the Word of God. Revel. 2. 10. & 14. 13.

And in *Ecclesiasticus*, which they hold also to be Canonicall, it is said, 22. 11. *Make not much weeping for the dead, for he is at rest. Seven dayes do mourn for him that is dead.* If he be in Purgatory, and in the fire and flames, is he in repose? and have not men reason to mourn and bewail them more than seven dayes? Eccles. 22. 11.

Finally, if there is a Purgatory, all those passages will be found false: but all those passages being true, the doctrine of Purgatory is false and lying.

And as for the ease which the souls in Purgatory are said to receive by the prayers of the living, it is said in *Eccles.* chap. 9. 5, 6. Eccles. 9. 5, 6. *The dead know not any thing, neither have they a portion for ever in any thing that is done under the Sun.*

If they have no portion in the works of this age, them all the merits and prayers which are applyed to them by the Pope and his Clergie, and by men profit them nothing.

Judge now (I beseech you) if those passages, and an infinite number of the like which I might alledge, are not clear against the doctrine of Purgatory: and notwithstanding of all that, they will establish it in the Church of *Rome* upon some very obscure passages, labouring to strike terrour in the hearts of the living, telling them that Christ hath not satisfied abundantly nor efficaciously, & that his passion hath not been of vertue sufficient to save us, which is properly to say, that it hath not had force and sufficiency enough to redeeme us, and satisfie the wrath of his Father for our sins; which is a doctrine repugnant to the infinite merits of Christ, and to the love which he hath carried to mankind, and to his word also; but moreover that we must satisfie by our own proper works and sufferings, either in this or the other world, and do (say they) as S. *Paul* teacheth us by those words, *Colos.* 1. 24. *I rejoyce in my* Colos. 1. 24. *sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his bodies sake, which is the Church, whereof I am made a Minister.* There do they conclude, that there is something remaining besides the passion of Christ, which we must perfect our selves by our own sufferings, and so that there is something wanting in the passion of Christ, and some defect and imperfection which we must accomplish; for though they use not these termes, yet that is the true sence of their doctrine.

But they should consider, that S. *Paul* calleth the ordinary afflictions of Christ, the tribulations and sufferings of the faithfull, in which our Saviour suffereth yet every day as in his members, reputing their afflictions his, and of his own members. And in that which S. *Paul* said, that he suffered for the Church whereof he was a Minister; it is not to say for her redemption, reconciliation, or satisfaction, but for her edification (as he saith in another place) that he *endured all things for the elects sake, that they*

may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ with eternall glory: 2 Tim. 2. 10.

2 Tim. 2. 10.

Now we must not imagine there was any thing wanting to the passion of our Saviour, to satisfie abundantly and sufficiently for all men, and all their sins to the justice of God his Father, or that all that we can contribute of ours, doth render it more perfect and powerfull; it is blasphemie to believe it, and out of all doubt it is to wrong the infinite merits of the blood of the Son of God; One drop whereof was capable to redeeme perfectly an hundred thousand worlds, if there were so many, and satisfie abundantly and perfectly for all sins, and the crime and punishment of them: and blessed is he who putteth his whole trust and confidence in the passion of Christ; and on the contrary, he is accursed from Gods own mouth, who putteth his confidence in man, and in his wayes and works; for he shall undoubtedly be confounded.

Notwithstanding of this, the Church of *Rome* saith that Christ by his death and passion hath not fully and perfectly satisfied for the sins of men, but onely for a part of them, the crime (to wit) and not for the punishment, and that men ought to make satisfaction in this life, or after our death in Purgatory, either by our selves, or by the satisfaction of good men, who apply their good works to us: and because Church men did believe that they should be deemed those godly men, and that people would run to them rather than to others to beg their help, and so that it was an open gate to them, and an occasion of great profit; this is the cause wherefore they have laboured to plant and defend this doctrine.

Nor have they been deceived in their expectation, for Christians too lightly terrified with the pains wherewith the souls were menaced after death, have often deprived themselves and their successours of the most part of their goods, to give them to Monks and Priests, that so they might oblige them to pray for them, and apply their good works and satisfaction to them, as well in their life time, as after their death.

Thence have the foundations of those great and rich Monasteries had their beginning, the revenues of which (some few excepted) serve at this present to entertain Cardinals, Prelates, and Noble mens children in princely pomp and magnificence, who notwithstanding think little on the soule of the poore founders, or their successors, except often to torment and vex them.

And on this doctrine, and by those foundations such a great

maladie

multitude of Priests, Monks, and religious persons have been introduced into the Romish Church, that it is almost incredible; so that in some cities which I know, there are above ten thousand Monks and Nunnes, and as for Priests, there be many countrey Parishes which have above thirtie: Now except (it may be) two or three of that number, who are imployed in preaching, on whom good revenues were well bestowed, to encourage and enable them in their imployment in so Noble an exercise, if they did preach the Gospel of Christ: the rest commonly have no other occupation, but to sing and say Masse for the subject of Purgatory, and by that invention especially, they all live and are entertained fatly.

For, the people affrighted with that terrible fire, cause often say Masses, Vigils, and Trentals, and found annuall Masses, and bring Obiits for themselves and their friends, and those obiits may be said with a loud or shrill voice, with great or small noise according to the monies they will bestow; and if it be at a great Masse, there must be so many coopes and coopers, so many lighted Torches, so many Bels either rolling or ringing the knell so often, and so long at every time, there must also be so many Priests present to sing and say so many Masses of such a sort, the Vigils, with so many Psalms and Lessons, with so many *Requiems*, *Libera* & *de profundis* at the end, then the holy water sprinkled upon the Tombe, &c. every one for his pains being to have so much, and a good dinner often for conclusion, where they drink to the health of the living, and say, God have the soules of the dead; and this is the end of the mysterie.

That truly among its superstition maketh a great shew and noise, and if the soules be drawn out of Purgatory by magnificence, sounding of bels, singing, and ceremonies; none but the soules of the poore will stay long in those fires, and the rich will come quickly out; But if men beleeve they come not out, but by devotion and fervent prayers, and other good works of that kind, when I was in the Romish Church, I did not beleeve for a long time, that to be of great vertue and force, seeing the small reverence and devotion those Priests use for the most part, looking rather how to disburthen themselves quickly of that task, then to deliver the soul out of Purgatory, and I have often thought with my self, that it was not without reason the Obiits lasted so many yeers, imagining indeed there behoved a great many of such

prayers

prayers and works to deliver one soul out of Purgatory, if they cannot be delivered but by works done in the favour and in the love of God, and in grace, (as they hold even in the Romish Church,)

And it is no marvell, that they who leave the Word of God, to follow humane inventions, fall in those confusions and disorders; But howsoever, the Priests find their profit thereon, and the peoples purses are often emptied; divers having often ruined their children to make foundations after their death, and some, especially women, incommodating often their families without their husbands knowledge, or even depriving themselves of bread and other necessarie things, not so much for making little boyes, recite the 7. Psalms who give five or six paire of them for a peny; as to make the Priests say Masses and Obiits, which are not so cheap.

Within these few ages, the Pope hath yet invented Indulgences and priviledged Altars, which is another mean to draw profit from them who are not so rich as to found so great Obiits, or who desire to content themselves with this new artifice, whereby they say a soul may be delivered out of Purgatory with lesse cost; and the profit thereof is both readier and frequenter on the Priests part; but I marvell much that the Pope who dispenseth those Indulgences at his pleasure, doth not deliver all the souls out of Purgatory so soon as they come thither, or doth not hinder them from going thither; for the one is as easie as the other to him (as he saith himself,) and I marvell wherefore he suffereth them to burn so long in those flames, seeing he can retire them without trouble or cost, onely by his Indulgences; I think Christian charity should require that of him: but let us a little examine the mystery of those Indulgences, whereof there is so great noise.

CHAP. XXIIII.

Of Indulgences.

IT is sufficiently known of all, that the Pope is one of the richest Monarchs in *Europe*, having as he is reported at this present onely by the liberalitie of Christians, above 24. thousand crowns

to ſpend every day; a rent whereof many great Princes, who have more lands than he, come far ſhort; but beſides thoſe temporall, viſible, and reall riches, he hath (ſaith he) others which he termeth ſpirituall, of which he is a more liberall diſpenſer than of the former; and thoſe are the merits and works of ſupererogation of the Saints, whereof he termeth himſelf Treaſurer and diſtributer, and which he diſperſeth according to his will and fancie, by that thing which he calleth Indulgences.

For my particular, when I was in the Romiſh Church, eſpecially in the ſix or ſeven laſt yeers, that I was the Popes Miſſionary, I was liberally enough provided of them both for my ſelf in particular, and to diſtribute to others; for, by vertue of my Buls, and quality of Miſſionary, beſides the Licence I had to abſolve from all ſins and caſes reſerved even in the Bull *In cœna Domini*, where I might alſo admit as many Deputies as I would; I could give full Indulgence and remiſſion of all the puniſhment due to all ſins great and ſmall, to all them who confeſſed themſelves to me, and to all them who being confeſſed, and having communicated, were preſent at my Sermons on all the feaſts of our Saviour, and the Virgin *Mary*, and others, ſo that they ſhould not go to Purgatory for their ſins paſt till that time, although they had lived fourſcore yeers. Moreover, in ſaying Maſſe I could deliver a ſoul out of Purgatory, perfectly every Monday in the yeer to my choice and will, beſides the Medails and Benedictions which I might have another way to diſtribute to whom I would. And I may truly ſay this of S^t. *Paul*, 1 *Cor.* 13. in this point, and others: *When I was a child, I ſpake as a child, I underſtood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childiſhneſſe.*

1 Cor. 13.

For I confeſſe (to my confuſion now) that I was very ſuperſtitious towards thoſe Indulgences, and did make uſe of them very often, as well for my ſelf as for others; and I did it ſo much the more willingly to others, that howſoever I took never any monies, nor made ever any temporall profit of them; Nevertheleſſe, I did perceive it was a ſtrong mean to me to draw people after me, and render them more affectionate to the doctrine which I would preach to them; and I know by long experience, there is almoſt nothing more efficacious to allure the people, eſpecially the ſimpler ſort, to do any thing they deſire, than the diſtribution of Indulgences.

And

And at what time the Popes did bethink themſelves to make the people beleeve that by thoſe Indulgences one might be delivered from the fire of Purgatory, and free others alſo, they found that doctrine to be exceeding profitable, as well to fill their coffers with money at the Jubilees (which were termed the Popes harveſt) as to leavie ſtrong Armies of Souldiers to defend their eſtates and Territories, and make warre againſt their enemies.

So that by the means of thoſe Indulgences they have often got many Millions, and leavied numberleſſe armies of Chriſtians, which they ſent out of their own countreys, to barbarous and remote countreys, where the moſt part loſt both their lives and eſtates; and that which in the beginning was onely done againſt the *Turks* as enemies of the Chriſtian faith, but eſpecially great enemies of the wealth and revenues of the Biſhop of *Rome*, who can pretend nothing where there is no Chriſtians; was afterwards practiſed even againſt Chriſtians for particular quarrels of the Pope, often injuſt and paſſionate.

Now, for that myſtery of the Indulgences it is to ſeek the darkneſſe at noonday, to think to find them proved and authoriſed by the holy Scriptures; and I could never ſee any paſſage taken out of the old or new Teſtament that made any wayes for them.

The onely place they think to be ſtrongeſt is that in S. *Matth.* 18. 18. which ſerveth to prove all things, and on which the authority of the Popes is eſpecially grounded, the words are; *All that ye ſhall bind on earth, ſhall be bound in heaven, &c.* which they extend even to the things under the earth, to Purgatory (to wit) which they ſay is under the earth; But this paſſage hath been ſufficiently explained in the precedent Chapters of Auricular Confeſſion, and of the Primacie of S. *Peter*, without saying any more upon it, to which places I remit the Reader without further anſwer to ſhun prolixitie. Matth. 18. 18.

Onely telling them here, that according to the letter of this paſſage (if it ſhould be underſtood as they will have it) the full power of Indulgences ſhould be given to all the Paſtors who call themſelves ſucceſſours of the Apoſtles in their office and miniſtry; but the Pope who cannot endure ſo many corrivals in his authoritie, hath divided this power betwixt himſelf, the Cardinals, and the Biſhops, but very unequally.

So that the Biſhops may give Indulgences but for fourty yeers,

the Cardinals for an hundred, and he onely ample and full ones, and for all the time and yeers a soul must be in Purgatory for its sin.

Notwithstanding, they give them not continually full, but sometime limiteth them to fourty yeers, sometimes to an hundred, and sometimes to a thousand; as in the Treasure of Indulgences of *St. Francis* girdle, there is an *Item* that hath; for every day from the nativity of our Lady there are 800. sixtie, and two thousand yeers, and an hundred dayes of Indulgences, and the remission of the third part of them; this is certainly a long time, and behold a fair Indulgence; for, all the time from the creation of the world to this time is nothing in comparison with this, it being not six thousand yeers; and here above eight hundred thousand; and yet this is not the greatest, besides the full ones; for sometimes he gives Indulgence and pardon for eighteen or twenty thousand, and some hundreds of yeers, and so many fourty and odde dayes; there wanteth nothing but some houres and minutes.

This Theology is not to be found explained in *S. Augustine*, nor *Athanasius*, nor others of the Ancients; for it was not in use then, yet many find, and large Commentaries are to be seen amongst the Moderns to clear all the mysteries of those thousand yeers, fourty dayes, and the third part of sins; but after reading them again, and again, and often times, I could never understand any thing in it, for the height and profoundnesse of the matter.

Now the thing that moved me to despise them, and maketh all men of understanding in the Church of *Rome* vilifie them, is, that nothing of this is found taught by Christ, nor practised by his Apostles; and I marvell much (if it was of divine institution) they did not use it to the weale and profit of poore Christians, which lived in their time, and that they did not apply to them by Indulgences (besides the merits of Christ) the merits of *Moses*, *Abel*, *Joseph*, *Jacob*, and *John* the Baptist, *S. Stephen*, and of all just and holy men, to deliver them all quickly out of the fire of Purgatory, or hinder them from going thither; and that when they did preach, or passed through Cities, they gave them not (besides their benedictions) a number of Indulgences, as the Pope and the Bishops do now adayes in visiting their Churches, for they wanted not charity for the good and prompt happinesse of Christians; and we may well say (if that doctrine be true) that

the Christians of our times are more beloved of God, and more fortunate, than were they of the Apostles times, and of the ages past; for, that Treasure of Indulgences, whereof there was no mention made in their time, is very liberally opened at this day, and the Indulgences which at their first institution were but seldome given, and onely for fourty or few yeers, and at great solemnities, as at the consecration of a Pope, or a Bishop, at the dedication of some mother Church, or some like occasion, are now almost ever given full, and that to them indifferently, who will honour the Pope so much as to ask them; they make also great catalogues and Items of all sorts, either in favour of the canonization of some new Saint, or some Embassador, or Prince, or some such like occasion.

And if a young Gentleman go to *Rome*, and have a desire to bring some thing to his Countrey that costeth not much, whereby he may oblige his friends at his return, if after he hath kissed the Popes pantofle he ask him some Indulgences; he will give him ten or twenty thousand without difficultie; for there needeth but a word, and an hundred thousand doth cost no more than two, neither in the giving nor in the carriage, if it were duckats he would not be so liberall: Now it may be he will say to him, I give you twenty thousand benedictions of such a Saint, or Prince; that is to say, the power to apply twenty thousand Indulgences of such a Tenure to twenty thousand beads, Medals, Images, or Crosses, and the like, in such sort that he who shall have one of those about him in saying some *Pater* or *Ave*, or using some such devotion, may deliver himself when he will from all the time he should be in Purgatory, from his birth even to that day, although he were an hundred yeers old, and can often deliver the souls of his friends which are in Purgatory, and do them that courtesie when they think least of it; and the Gentleman when he returneth will give one half of them (it may be) to his Mistresse, to oblige her; and mark, that it often doth and may fall out, that he who can dispose of so great and considerable a portion of the treasure of the merits of Christ, and the holy Martyrs and Confessors, to deliver himself and many others out of Purgatory when it pleaseth him; is an Atheist, a blasphemer, murtherer, and a man given to all vices, having neither God nor soul, and who beleeveth neither an heaven nor hell; nevertheless (according to that good doctrine) it must

take

take effect and be of force, especially in others; for such is the will, disposition, and resolution of the holy Father the Pope, who can bind and loose how and when he will, and dispose of the merits of Christ Jesus, and the Saints, as of the Cabage in his garden.

God knoweth, and all men of any understanding in the Church of *Rome*, I say nothing here but that which is commonly practised, and which ought to be beleeved of all good Papists who are the true children of the Pope; But if it be difficile to beleeve all this without the Word of God, let them remember themselves, they should have a blind faith, and not be so curious, nor to be disciples of Christ, but to be disciples of the Pope.

CHAP. XXV.

Of the Congregations and religious Orders.

BEcause the learnedst and most judicious of the Romish Church confesse, that the profession of the three Monastical and religious vows is not an institution of Christ, there being no such thing found in the holy Scripture, nor practised by the Apostles; but onely an humane invention, which had its beginning many ages after; and which by the industrie and diligence of the Popes, who (for their particular profit) did take them (almost from the beginning) in their speciall protection, have been augmented and maintained even to that degree, wherein we see it at this day; and because all those professions have their straighteſt obligation onely from the authoritie of the Pope, who dispenseth on it when and to whom he will; which sheweth, he beleeveth not himself there is any divine obligation, but onely humane; having proved sufficiently in the former Chapters, that this power of the Pope is void and usurped, it is hereafter needlesse to trouble our selves any more to shew the nullity and invaliditie of those professions to oblige any one whatsoever: so we shall content our selves to shun prolixity with this foundation which we have laid for this point, and others the like; and onely say here, that as the Indulgences have served in former times the Bishop of *Rome* to inroll an infinite number of Souldiers under his Ensignes, to make war for the conservation

and augmentation of his revenues and estate; they have been also very usefull to gather a multitude of Christians under a great number of fraternities, congregations, and other orders; which the Pope having instituted, and established under the name, and at the instance of some particular persons, especially for the defence and augmentation of his power and authoritie in time of peace against his enemies and evill willers; hath shortly after furnished and gratified them with an infinite number of Indulgences, priviledges, and immunities, as well to unite them, and make them more affectionate to him, gratifying them with so many favours; as to allure to themselves more people under colour and pretext of the great number of pardons and graces both for themselves and their friends: knowing that the greater and stronger those companies should be, the stronger and surer should be his partie.

And howsoever the Popes in the beginning did favour some companies and orders more than others, either because they were taken from amongst them, or for particular affections, or other respects; Nevertheless, they have been constrained in the end, to avoid jealousie to make all common, and make a great Bull to that effect, which they have called the great Sea *Mare magnum*, in which they have swallowed up all those favours and priviledges, and made them common to all the orders; so, for the present they are all omnipotent on earth in matter of exemptions, priviledges and Indulgences; and there is not almost a simple Priest amongst them who hath not greater power than the whole body of Bishops together in that which concerneth their estate.

Those sweet and forcible inticements of Indulgences and priviledges have much served many Orders to allure an infinite multitude of followers, and to win the affections of the people, and oblige them to give great Alms, and their means liberally, that they may partake of their favours and Indulgences: and the plentifull effects of this, are to be seen in many Monasteries and Houses so rickly founded, in Churches and Chappels so sumptuously builded, and enriched, and in an innumerable and insupportable multitude of Monks, and religious persons which live there, and are entertained in plentie, although at the cost and almost generall complaint of all the Provinces repub liques and Cities through the Christian world where they are, and to the great

great discontentment of Bishops, and prejudice even of secular Priests; both because they run (as they say) on their Marches, and being companies furnished with all sorts of spirits and appearance of holinesse, know better how to snatch the substance of the people; and because they are more prodigall of their Sermons often than they are desired, they keep, by that means, the Priests and Pastors in ignorance and negligence; there being few Priests and Pastors (principally because of that) in the Romish Church, who imploy themselves in preaching as they ought; where we see in the places and kingdoms where those orders, or rather disorders are not, almost all the Ministers give themselves to that Noble and commendable exercise, and for the most part with great successe.

And for the great enterprises upon the rights of the Clergie, grounded (say they) on their Buls, there is at this day betwixt them, the Bishops and Priests, such a notable dissention and strange scandall in the Church of *Rome*, that they of that partie are ashamed, and know not what to think on; and it is probable that ere it be long, the interchucks of those great and heavie clouds will make terrible thundrings; I pray God the lightnings may be good, and the effects happie.

But certainly it is not without subject, if the Bishops complain so much, to see, the Pope of *Rome* whom they esteeme but their equall, under pretext of his usurped authority, send them fellow-helpers in their Dioceses without their consent, and even against their will and inclination, which (say they) have more power than themselves, and brag they are exempted from their jurisdiction, preaching in their Dioceese against their will, and confessing in despight of them, and all the Pastors; and who by their Indulgences and Papall priviledges, and other Monasticall allurements, withdraw their sheep out of their Parish and common fold, causing schismes in their Churches, especially by the means of certain congregations and brotherhoods, invented of purpose to bind the people to them, and draw from them their wealth and possessions, which is the drift and end of the mystery; and truly it would vex a Saint (as they say:) and if the Bishops power were answerable to their good will, there would in a short time be no religious nor Monks in the world, acknowledging at their own cost too late that institution never to have been of Christ nor his Apostles, but onely a humane invention

which

which the Popes have made use of, to maintain their authoritie amongst the people, especially against the contradictions of the Bishops: and truly the Pope hath not any stronger pillars at this present in the world; for he maintaineth them by priviledges and immunities, and they defend him by their tongue and writings; so one hand scratcheth another.

Now if the Bishops complain so much, seeing their authoritie so far wronged in and by them; the kingdoms republiques, and Cities do no lesse at this present, finding their shoulders loaded, and their purses extremely lightned thereby; for, the most part of them are open or secret beggars, who calling themselves voluntarily poore, are shameless, and beleeve meus whole estate belongs to them, and that every one is bound to give them; and who by their stratagems and importunitie can suck the very blood of families, leaving often nothing but the bones for the poore children to gnaw; for if you chase them out by the one dore, they will returne by the other; If they be refused by word, they enter againe by friends and other inventions; if you give them a flat denialll, they calumniate you amongst your neighbours as an avaritious or ungodly man; if yee give to one, yee must give to twenty, nay, even to all, for feare of incurring their disgrace and the bad effects of their tongues, which are rather beleeved of the people when they lie, than others when they speake truth; and the Trumpets that sound every where; it is impossible to content them all, otherwise men must have the riches of *Salomon*. Moreover, they are insatiable; so that an honest man that would maintaine his family in any good fashion and shew, that his children may obtaine better matches, if he cannot give those men proportionably to that which they see appeare outwardly, he is often redacted to such extremities, that makes him send a thousand complaints and sighes unto heaven, against the institution and establishment of those kinde of men.

It is impossible to hinder them when they have a minde to settle themselves in any Citie or Bishopricke, for being troopes composed of a number both of quick and dull spirits, they finde easily friends strong and able enough to force and constraine the wills, even of Princes; and if Kings refuse them, they set new inventions and practises on foote, to move and stirre up Queenes to prosecute their designes; so that it is not to be marvailed if

they enter whereſoever they will, and there maintaine themſelves againſt the will and combination almoſt of all.

And which is worſe, there is almoſt no religious Order, which hath not a deſire to multiply, inlarge, and eſtabliſh themſelves every where, to poſſeſſe and governe all themſelves alone, and when they are eſtabliſhed, they move heaven and earth to hinder, leaſt any companions ſhould come and live neere them, or be admitted not onely where they reſide, but in all the Circumference and Sphere of their activitie. I know a certaine Order which being eſtabliſhed in a Towne, hath (to my knowledge) aſſayed all meanes for divers yeares, to hinder the Orders of Jeſuits, Recolects, Penitents, Minims, Fathers Oratories, Feüillants, ſhod and bare-footed Carmelites, Pyramidall *Auguſtines*, and others, to ſettle neere them.

Now if ſo much good commeth from thoſe Orders (as they make the people beleeve) I would gladly aske, wherefore they trouble and diſquiet themſelves ſo much to hinder others from being admitted and received with them, to contribute to the Common good, as they doe; conſidering the ſpirits and inclinations of the people to be different, and one will like one Order who will diſlike another; ſeeing alſo (as they often preach) there cannot be too many good men in the world; but charitie (ſay they) beginneth at home, or to ſpeake the truth, covetouſneſſe commandeth them as well as other paſſions, eſpecially vanitie and pride.

I remember I have heard many great Preachers and Doctors, yea, even Prelates of eſpeciall learning and examplary life in the Romiſh Church, apply to them in their Sermons the words ſpoken by our Saviour of the Phariſees and Scribes, *Mar.* 12. 38. *Beware of the Scribes who love to goe in long cloathing, and love ſalutations in the Market places, and the chiefeſt ſeats in the Synagogues, and the uppermoſt Roomes at feaſts, which devoure widdows houſes, and for a pretence make long prayers, thoſe ſhall receive greater Damnation.* Mark. 12. 38.

And many among them did confeſſe, the application was good enough for the moſt part, and they ſeemed to ſuffer it as perſecution for Juſtice; notwithſtanding under-hand they left nothing unaſſayed whereby to be revenged and hinder them to preach any longer, for feare they ſhould reveale other things, and diſcovers more of their myſteries.

For

For my part, it is not my designe here or desire to speake any thing, either of particular persons, or Congregations; although it may well be believed that if I would open my mouth, or move my pen, I know many singularities concerning the disorders which have been committed, and which are committed there every day to shame many; but as I pretend nothing but the weale and conversion of soules, not their confusion, I desire rather to bury all in silence than discover any thing, & I will say no more of it, except some froward and impertinent spirit (as there are diverse) will cause me of lying and imposture in this Discourse, and give me occasion to explaine my selfe more clearly, and produce more evident examples and proofes to justifie my selfe of this crime; and so constraine my nature and inclination to doe that which I desire not, and which questionlesse will be displeasing to many.

Contenting my selfe to say for the present, happy are the peoples and Kingdomes which onely strive to frame their beliefe and discipline according to the words and institution of Christ, putting far from them all those humane inventions, & set themselves out of danger of suffering those convulsions and disorders in their bowels which cause such cruell torments and strange collicks to many Countreys and Cities; happie are the Princes and States which shut their gates upon them, and stop their eares upon their importunate sollicitations; and thrice happy all they who will open their eares to consider their misery, and use wholsome remedies and resolutions to deliver themselves from that slavish tyranny, in which the pollicy of the Pope and the Romish Church doth detaine them. But I hope that great Physitian will take order ere long; and there is great appearance that shortly he will give some remedie; for the disease seemeth at the point of its *Crisis*.

Chap. XXVI.

Of Justification.

I Did imagine for a long time (as doe many of the Church of Rome at this present) that they of the Reformed Churches admitting Justification by faith alone, did it to exclude good works from the way of salvation, and shew themselves in that

to be enemies of charitie, and of other vertues. I did therefore extreamly condemne them, and could in no wise approve of their doctrine; but when I came to sound their beliefe, and see how they are not onely carefull to practise good workes and vertues, and that even much more than they of the Romish Church; and that they judged them necessary to salvation; and that the faith whereof they speake, is not a dead faith (as the Papists understand it) but a lively faith, accompanied with good workes, and fruitfull in vertues. I acknowledged they wrongfully blamed them in this, and in many other things also, either maliciously to make them odious to the people, or ignorantly for not knowing their doctrine; as that they make God the Author of sin; and say, that Christ hath suffered all the very pangs of hell; and the like impertinent calumnies, which they never dreamed of, and which are very different from their beliefe.

It is most certaine that the faith whereof Christ hath spoken so much to us, and which he desired of those whom he did convert to Christianisme, and called to be his followers, and of whom he saith, that *whosoever shall believe in him, shall have eternall life*; it is not that which is defined by the Romish Church to be a simple knowledge or beliefe, or a consenting to all that God hath revealed to us; for, otherwise the Devills should have faith and consequently be saved. But true justifying faith is another thing; for it is not onely a simple knowledge and beliefe of God, and of all that he hath revealed, but it is further a firme beliefe in God; that is to say, a trust in his promises, and a sure knowledge of his love towards us, as by his holy Word he declareth himselfe to be our Father and Saviour by the merits of Christ.

Joh. 6. 47.

Now this faith which worketh by knowledge and relyeth altogether on the promise of God, is necessarily fruitfull in good workes; for from the knowledge of the love which God beareth towards us, doth proceed our love towards him; and it is altogether impossible to trust in the promise of God & not love him, and make good workes follow; thereby also is true faith discerned from a false, (to wit) if it worke by charitie, if it be joyned with a serious repentance, and bring peace of conscience, if it be humble, not trusting in its owne merits, but upon the promise of God in Christ, if it kindle the zeale and love of God in our hearts.

Such

Such is the faith by which we are iustified, that is to say, absolved before God, and made pleasing to him, thorough the righteousnesse of Iesus Christ, and of which it is said, *Ioh. 6. 47. He that beleeveth on him hath life eternall*; and *Rom. 1. 7. The iust shall live by faith*: and this faith is not to be found in the Devils, nor in the damned (as the Church of Rome will have it.) Joh. 6. 47. Rom. 1. 7.

This being laid downe for the definition of faith, it will not be hard to beleeve, that we are iustified by faith & not by works; seeing even the Apostle saith it so cleerly, that there is no truth so manifestly declared as this; and I thinke for my part, that he who will not beleeve it, must be extreamly blinded or obstinate. Reade (I pray you) the third, fourth, and fift Chapters to the *Romans*, there you will finde how this doctrine is proved.

He saith in the third Chap. verf. 27. *Where is boasting then? it is excluded, by what Law? Of works? Nay, but by the Law of faith, therefore we conclude that a man is iustified by faith without the deeds of the Law.* And verf. 29. *For it is God who shall iustifie the Circumcision by faith, and the Uncircumcision through faith.* And Chap. 4. 3. *For what saith the Scripture? Abraham beleeved God, and it was counted to him for righteousnesse.* And verf. 23. *Therefore it was imputed to him for righteousnesse. Now it was not written for his sake alone, but for us also to whom it shall be imputed, if we beleeve in him that raised up Iesus our Lord from the dead.* And Chap. 5. 1. *Therefore being iustified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Iesus Christ.* And *Gal. 2. 16. Knowing that a man is not iustified by the workes of the Law, but by the faith of Christ, even we have beleeved in Iesus Christ, that we might be iustified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the Law; for by the works of the Law shall no flesh be iustified.* Rom. 3. 27. Verf. 29. Ch 4. 3. & V. 23, 24. Verf. 23. Rom. 5. 1. Gal. 2. 16.

To doubt, after all those so cleare passages, that faith doth not iustifie, and that we are not iustified by faith, but by workes, is to be holden for incredulous and voide of sence; for my part, after I had once considered and knowne the true definition of faith, and seriously examined those passages, it was impossible to me to doubt of so cleare a truth.

True it is, if we doe no good but evill workes, we cannot be saved, yet if we be saved, it will not be for our good workes, but by the onely goodnesse of God, and by faith and confidence in his love and promises.

I will illustrate it by this example: A King adopteth one of his Subjects freely to be heire of his Kingdoms & enjoy his Crowne, providing he behave himselfe honestly and not otherwise; if the man offend the King, he maketh himselfe questionlesse unworthy of the heritage and succession, and there is no appearance he can possesse it; but if he behave himselfe wisely and doe well, ought he to thinke, it is his good deeds which have merited the crowne to him? No truly; for many would doe a great deale better, greater and more laudable actions, who will not therefore enjoy that possession and heritage; but it is the onely goodnesse of the King, which is the cause, and his onely voluntary and free adoption which giveth him right to that succession.

So fareth it in this matter; By faith in Christ wee are adopted to be his children and heires of his glory, and as his adopted children we ought to strive to please him in all things, and if we offend him and transgresse his commandements, and commit crimes against him, we make our selves unworthy of that heritage and of his favours, and if we be not reconciled to him, we shall be deprived thereof and never possesse it.

But if we be obedient to his Commandements, and do our dutie; those are not nevertheless our good workes and actions which merit that favour; for, many may doe the like works and actions, either of charitie, of almes, of justice, honour father and mother, or the like, who not being adopted by faith, shall not obtaine such an heritage, nor the glory of God; so wee must not trust to our workes and imagine they justifie and save us.

And if it be sometimes said in the Scripture, that the recompence followeth the workes, and if we doe well we shall have our reward, or the like; Wee must not thinke this recompence followeth the workes and is precisely given for their merits, but because of the faith in Christ, and in his promises which accompany them, or rather which give them their excellence.

I confesse that in former times, when I would make a serious reflex upon the workes which I did, which were esteemed good and ranked amongst the best in the eyes of the world, as fasting, austerities, mortification of the flesh, suffering of cold, watching and many such things, which are common enough in the Congregation where I was; when I had done all that I was able to make them perfect and meritorious, and when I joyned all the zeale, puritie, and love of God was possible, I did notwithstan-

ing ever finde so many inward defects and imperfections, that I could never perswade my selfe they were of great efficacy before God to merit his favour or any heavenly recompences; they afflict indeed and bring downe the body, and make it more able and apt to obey the Spirit (which was S. *Pauls* end;) and if they be not discreetly used, they bring men into many infirmities and diseases; but that they might merit Gods favour or glory, or be capable to deliver a soule out of Purgatory, or satisfie for our sins, I could never firmely beleeve any such thing.

And I know certainly from the knowledge which the governing of a multitude of soules hath taught me, this doctrine doth so little assure the consciences, that there are none but fooles and presumptuous persons which thinke to merit Gods favour or heaven to themselves or to others thereby. And all wise men agree in this, that there is nothing but a quickning faith can justifie us before God; and howsoever the doctrine of the Church of Rome maketh faith to be onely the ground, and saith it is the love of God which justifieth, with the ground of faith, yet this love of God, well explained with the ground of faith, it seemeth to be no other thing than a quickning faith by charitie, and a beliefe and confidence in the merits of Christ and his promises; and so I thinke that the agreement would not be very hard to be made in this point.

Nevertheless, the Romish Clergie, (principally the Fryars) making but little mention of faith, as if it were not of so great importance, preach nothing but workes, and especially of the body, as fasting, mortification of the flesh, disciplines, haire-cloaths, and the like, and chiefly Almes; and it seemeth even in hearing them, that the doctrine of good works is all brought to this head, and they doe it purposely: and all that (say they) is comprehended under the word *Penitence*, which *John* the Baptist did preach in the Wilderness, though he understood a repentance from sin and amendment of life. And because by Almes men deprive themselves of some commodities, that is also comprehended by them under the word *Penitence*, and they know well enough how to illustrate this doctrine by other passages out of Scripture.

I may say from sufficient knowledge, that which our Saviour said of the Pharisees, *Mat.* 23. 3. might be justly enough applyed to them, to wit, *Doe not after their workes; for they say and* Mat. 23. 3.

doe

doe not; for they binde heauie burdens and grieuous to be borne, and lay them on mens shoulders, but they themselues will not moue them with one of their fingers, but all their workes they doe for to be seene of men. And vers. 27. *Woe unto you Scribes and Pharisees hypocrites, for yee are like unto whited Sepulchres, which indeed appeare beautifull outward, but are within full of dead mens bones, & of all uncleanesse; Even so, yee also outwardly appeare righteous unto men, but within yee are full of hypocrisie and iniquitie.* For many preach fasting, which love good cheare, and do fast as seldome as they can; many preach the haire-cloath, which never made use of it; and so of other things, which I will explaine no further.

Vers. 27.

But because they know well that the people like not much those austerities and corporall mortifications, and doe not willingly practise them, and that they are beleeved amongst the vulgar to doe many such things, because of the externall appearance, and they labour of purpose to seeme austere; they make them beleeve that their almes will satisfie for all, and that if they will become benefactours of their Churches and Orders, or be of their Congregations, and third Orders, or joyne themselves to their fraternities of the scapulaire, or girdle, and the like, or be adopted children of their Orders, they will make them partakers of all the good workes, which have been, are, and shall be done amongst them now and for ever through all ages to come: for, words are of great vertue in these matters.

What a great number are done amongst them, and how, and in what excellency and perfection all those fine workes (whereof they brag so much, and make such a noise in the eares of the people, and whereof some prefer themselves to others,) are done ordinarily, they know what I might say, and that they have but small ground of glory, but (howsoever it is) they promise them, or (if I durst say) they sell them, (for they give nothing for naught,) and that with a number of fine and specious ceremonies to allure others; and when they adopt them for spirituall children, they give them large Patents, sealed with as broad Seales as those of a Chancellary, whereby they declare unto them, that in vague thereof they make them partakers of all their austerities, fastings, haire-cloaths, mortifications, disciplines, prayers, pilgrimages, voyages, travels by post, in Coach, on foot, heat, cold, hunger and thirst, good and evill; for, to them that love God (say they) all things worke to the best (according to the Apostle

Apoſtle.) Finally, of all the works and many more which are done amongſt them; and by that means ſimple people think they go to heaven in their clothes, never ſeeing ſo much as a ſparkle of the fire of Purgatory, how great ſinners ſoever they can or will be; and imagine they may ſo ſleep ſoundly.

But all thoſe Letters are properly accounted among them nothing but cozening tricks, as are all thoſe congregations, third Orders, fraternities of the great and ſmall Cord, of the Scapulare, and others ſuch ſmall trifles and inventions, which have continually faire and devout pretexts; But which in truth tend onely to the temporall profit of the ghoſtly fathers. I will ſay no more, for here is a gulfe of myſteries and confuſions, which I will not diſcover, it being not my purpoſe.

CHAP. XXVII.

Of the heavineſſe of the yoke of the Church of Rome, in compariſon of the yoke of Chriſt.

AS the compariſon which I made of the doctrine of the Romiſh Church with that of our Saviour Chriſt, made me ſee ſo great a difference therein, that I judged with great reaſon it was not the ſame doctrine, but another invented by men; ſo have I oftentimes compared the yoke of *Rome* with that of Chriſt, and found his to be light and eaſie (as he ſaith) *Matth.* 11.30. and the Romiſh cruell, and inſupportable, inſtituted rather for the deſtruction and death of ſouls, than for their ſalvation and profit, as I ſhall eaſily make it appear by the conſideration of Gods Commandments with thoſe of that Church. Matth. 11.30.

It is known to every one, that God was content onely to give us ten commandments by his Prophet *Moſes*, which Chriſt hath recommended unto us, aſſuring us that if we ſhall keep them, we ſhall enter into life eternall; (*If thou wilt enter into life, keep the Commandments*) ſaith he to the young man in the Goſpel: and truly howſoever we are conceived in iniquitie, and naturally inclined to do evil, yet there is none of how little breeding ſoever, who will not judge the commandment of God light and eaſie to be obeyed by the aſſurance of his holy Spirit, which is never deficient to the faithfull; for they are onely grounded

upon those two commandments of love, to wit, to love God and our neighbour, which are commandments sweet and easie to every good nature and soul that is desirous of its salvation: Moreover, the most part are onely negative, that we may abstain from doing evill, as not to adore false gods, not to sweare, not to kill, not to steal, and the like, which seem not to be so hard to every good and honest nature.

And although all our actions be corrupt and imperfect, and we cannot do any thing here perfectly, and without fault; yet I doubt not but there are many faithfull who keep the Commandments of God sufficiently, to hope for eternall life by faith in the blood and merits of Christ.

But the Pastors of the Romish Church, or rather the Bishop of *Rome*, going beyond the Commandments of God by his traditions, is not content with the ten Commandments of God; but attributing to himself the authority and power of God over man, he hath imposed six or seven more commandments upon them, (besides the ten) which are for the most part positive; and seem indeed to be but seven, but contain above three hundred, which every Christian is obliged to accomplish every yeer under pain of eternall damnation, if he be in the belief of the Romish Church; and the most part of them are so difficult for most men to accomplish, that they may rather be said to be gives and snares to cast souls into perdition, than a furtherance and help to salvation (as I shall clearly shew in the manner following.)

As the Doctors in the Romish Church (disdaining to use the termes of the holy Scripture) have summed up the ten Commandments in *French* Rhime, and so read them to the people, they have done also with the commandments of their Church, and say them publikely after this manner.

The Church commandeth every one to sanctifie the holy dayes,
On every Sabbath hear the Masse they must, and one the Feasts likewise.
All Lent, foure times, and Saints Eves for to fast,
And no flesh Saterdayes nor Fridayes feasts:
Thy soule sincerely once a yeer confesse,
Thy Maker humbly also take at Passe,
Pay all the tithes and duties to the Church.

I remember when I was a little child, they taught us onely six, and I have seen for a long time the Commandments of the Church

Church but six in number; but within this little time, that of Tithes is crept into the books, and is read at this day with their other Commandments, as of equall obligation with the rest, which is obligation of damnation, and eternall death, according to their common doctrine; for, they teach, and all their Doctors and Canonists hold, that those commandments of the Church are of the obligation of mortall sin, as well as the ten Commandments of God, although there be no mention made thereof in the holy Scripture, which is properly to go beyond the Commandments of God with the traditions of men.

And however they seem to be but seven commandments, notwithstanding they will be found to be about 300. or more, which every Christian is obliged to accomplish every yeer under pain of eternall damnation, (except in case of manifest necessitie,) so there is few dayes in the yeer, wherein there are not some one or more to observe besides the obligations we owe to the Commandments of God.

This may be clearly proved after this manner; for the first Commandment which obligeth men to sanctifie all the feasts instituted, that is to say, that all the holy dayes which are commanded by the Romish Church be observed and kept, as the Sondayes, and that the people work none of them, nor do any handie nor servile work; there being above 50. Holidayes every yeer, besides the Sondayes; behold alreadie fifty more commandments to be observed every yeer by every faithfull person.

The second Commandment, is to hear the Masse the holy dayes and Sondayes; here it is to be noted, that it is not sufficient to be idle, and abstain from all labour and handy works, as well the Sabbaths as all the fiftie holidaies; Neither is it sufficient to give themselves to prayer, to read and hear the Sermon, or be imployed in any pious exercise; but moreover they must hear the Masse with attention and reverence; so that there being everie yeer above an hundred Sondayes and holidayes, there are also above an hundred obligations and commandments under pain of sin and damnation to every Christian every yeer; so there is above 150. every yeer.

The third commandment is to fast all the Vigils, the foure times, and all Lent; where ye are to observe, that there are twelve dayes in the foure times, and at least as many vigils, which make 24. dayes, with fourty in Lent, which make above three-

ſcore; and they are obliged every day to faſt under pain of mortall ſin, and there be very few, (as all the Caſuiſts affirm) who are juſtly exempted; for from the age of 21. till threeſcore, all thoſe who are able to faſt without great & manifeſt prejudice of their health, ought to do it; ſo that thoſe are 60. new commandments, which joyned to the former, make alreadie above 200.

Moreover, he muſt abſtain all the faſting dayes from fleſh, under pain of mortall ſin, (that is to ſay, neither eat fleſh, eggs, nor butter, (according to the Statute) and ſome one will eaſily faſt, who cannot ſo eaſily keep this abſtinence; ſo there are 60. more commandments from this, which being joyned with the former, (beſides Gods ten Commandments) make above two hundred and fourſcore commandments of the Church, which every faithfull perſon ought to obſerve every yeer; and are onely comprehended in the firſt commandments; beſides thoſe of keeping abſtinence every Friday and Saterday, and others which we might find in them that reſt, in the laſt of which onely which is to pay the tithes and dues to the Church, a great number might be remarked, and ſo we ſhould have above 300.

Now God having given us onely ten Commandments, the moſt part whereof are negatives; and the Church of *Rome* propoſing above 300. whereof the moſt part are affirmative, and without holy Scripture, of her own authoritie and particular invention, may we not ſay firſt, that ſhe goes beyond the Commandments of God by her traditions; and next, that the yoke of Chriſt is light and eaſie, and the Romiſh yoke heavie and inſupportable; and if the authoritie of the Church of *Rome* be true, ſome men might be ſaved if there were no more but the Commandments of God, which will be condemned for not doing thoſe of the Church; and an infinite multitude might fulfill the commandments of God ſufficiently to be ſaved, which muſt be damned; becauſe they have not faſted, or do not faſt all Lent over, and other faſting dayes, or who have not heard the Maſſe all the Sondayes and holidayes, or who have wrought or cauſed their ſervants work on them.

I leave off to ſpeak here of an infinite multitude of other commandments of that Church, which are not common to all Chriſtians, but to the Prieſts alone, and thoſe who are in Orders, and poſſeſſe Benefices; as every day to ſay their *Brevier* which is very long and wearieſome; as alſo of all other precepts and commandments

mandments particular to every religious Order, which truly make a great multitude of poore souls groane and lament, who out of simplicitie and ignorance have unhappily suffered themselves to be oppressed under the weight of their burthens. But I will let them groane so long as they will, if knowing their error and abuse (as do the most part) they will not take a necessarie resolution to break all those humane bonds wherewith they are detained in that captivity, and follow after the doctrine of Christ, whose yoke is easie, and burthen light.

CHAP. XXVIII.

If one can be saved in the Church of Rome.

IT is certain that no man can be saved but by the faith which Christ did declare, and the Apostles hold and preach, which is the onely true and perfect faith, without which none can hope for salvation; Now I having shewed clearly (as ye have seen) that the faith of the Church of *Rome* is another different from that of Christ and his Apostles; the consequence is easie to be drawn.

But as I remember never to have hindred those of the Reformed Religion, so much to become docile to the doctrine I preached to them when I was in darknesse, as when (according to the maximes of the Romish Church) I preached to them that they would all be damned without remission; so that I may not alienate the spirits of those of the Romish Religion from the reading of this discourse, and lest that thinking me too severe, they rellish not so well the reasons which they might read in this Treatise, I chose rather to let them draw the conclusions themselves, and remit the decree to Gods judgement, to whom onely it appertaineth to pronounce the sentence of the salvation and condemnation of souls.

But the thing I especially intend in this Chapter, is, to shew to those of the Romish Church, that even according to their proper maximes and doctrine, it is impossible for them (speaking morally) to be saved: I know this proposition will seem a paradox to many, but if they will onely take the pains to see and examine the reasons on which I am grounded, I perswade my self

that even the most learned will confesse, and acknowledge it with me; for they cannot deny it, it being the common doctrine of their own Schools and books, which questionlesse a multitude of simple people have never been aware of.

I will not speak here of the difficultie they of the Romish Church may meet withall (as do other Christians) in the keeping of Gods ten Commandments; for howsoever I know certainly, and may speak it truly, that they are worse kept and fulfilled in that Church than in the Reformed Religion in *England*, or other places which I have seen; yet I will leave this point and comparison till the following chapter, and will shew this impossibilitie of salvation onely by the commandments which are added by the Romish Church, or rather by the Popes of *Rome* to the ten Commandments of God; and I shall shew it especially in the obligation of hearing Masses on Sundayes and holidaies, and in the conditions of the mystery of confession; for notwithstanding that according to the maximes of their Doctors, the obligation to fast all Lent over, and at other dayes commanded, ought to damne and destroy many, who otherwaies (it may be) are persons unblameable, walking straightly in the observation of Gods ten Commandments, yea, and in many other things: but having too much ado to fast, do it not, although they might do it if they would but endeavour to do the same, and be not of the number of them whom the Lawes of fasting exempted.

And howsoever also the obligation to keep the holidaies strictly without working, or causing others to work, should condemne (according to their doctrine) another great multitude, by whom this rigid and straight commandment is hard to be kept for the great charge and imployment of their calling; yet that is nothing in comparison of the difficultie that is in the commandments of hearing the Masse, which obligeth all Christians, and the saying over of the *Breviary*, (which obligeth the Priests) and the obligation of Auricular confession (which is common to all.)

Because ye must know according to the Doctors and Casuists of the Romish Church, that for accomplishing the commandment of hearing the Masse, it is not sufficient to be there bodily present, but to fulfill the precept, one must be present in attention and devotion, so that he who is distracted, and thinketh or dreameth

dreameth on any other thing than on God, either by expreſſe or ſecret conſent, (that is to ſay) doth not all he is able to give attention, and baniſheth not faithfully all thoughts, but is diſtracted for a conſiderable time during the Maſſe, which is thought to be about the fourth part of it, or almoſt the third part, that man heareth not the Maſſe, but is obliged to hear another the ſame day attentively, if he will fulfill the precept.

Now let every man judge in himſelf, how few there are which fulfill this precept in hearing the Maſſe without diſtraction or wandring minds, and which labour to diſcharge themſelves, and baniſh them when they come with fidelitie: and we ſee but few who go to hear a ſecond Maſſe, as beleeving they have not heard the firſt devoutly enough.

Some may ſay all this is but a little ſcruple, and of no great importance, but according to all the Caſuiſts and Doctors of the Romiſh Church, the obligation to hear the Maſſe with the aforeſaid attention and devotion every holiday and Sunday, is a precept of mortall ſin and eternall damnation: ſo it is of great importance, and cannot be ſaid to be a ſcruple; and I have known ſome timorous people, which terrified with that rigid doctrine, did often hear three or foure, and after all, were little better content, and did beleeve that point alone capable to deſtroy them, though otherwayes people of good life.

That which is ſaid of the Maſſe in regard of all Chriſtians, is ſaid likewiſe of the *Breviary* and canonicall houres in reſpect of the Clergie; for they are obliged by the Popes Bull, and by his Councels, under pain of mortall ſin and eternall damnation, to recite them every day devoutly and with attention: and the longer thoſe prayers are, the more hard alſo is the obſervation of this precept; and I have ſeen ſome diſtracted thereby, and others to fulfill faithfully that commandment, and ſet their conſciences at quiet, tell one Pſalme or verſe ten times over, beleeving not to have had ſufficient attention, and after all that, were yet in doubt; and of this number were even many Theologians and good Preachers. Finally, this ſheweth clearly enough, that if the Romiſh doctrine be true, it is impoſſible even to the moſt zealous, to ſave themſelves by this point.

Now let us ſee the myſtery of Auricular confeſſion; the difficultie is yet greater here, for, the rules and conditions of the confeſſion are (according to all their Doctors) that when one confeſſeth

Navar. Toler. Bonac. Less. & alii Casuist.

fesseth himself, he is obliged first to declare all his publique and secret sins, all his vitious actions, words and thoughts, and the circumstances aggravating the sin, and even the number of every sort, whether be action, word, or thought. As for example, how many times one hath sworn, and how many times he hath had bad thoughts, of what sort, and how long he did delight and take pleasure in every one.

And that they may declare all, they are strictly obliged to use all morall diligence to remember them, and this moral diligence is taken according to the intervalles of confessions, and the goodnesse of every ones memory; so that he who confesseth often, and hath a good memory, needeth not so much time as another who confesseth but seldome, and hath not so good a memory; and every one must imploy so much time, and take so much pains to examine himself before hand, as is requisite to remember all, and omit nothing.

And although (according to the generall precept of the Romish Church) one is bound onely to confesse himself once a yeer, yet if in going but once they do not remember all, they must go oftner, and so often as is necessarie to every one that he omit none of his sins; and so every one almost will find himself obliged to go to confession every week, and even oftner: and if he cannot remember them at the time of confession but by writing, he is obliged to write them. In a word, they are obliged under pain of damnation, to use all means and times possible and convenient that they forget nothing.

And if for want of time or care, or sufficient and due preparation they leave off any thing of importance, whether it be action, word, thought, circumstance or number; the confession is invalid and void, for it wanteth fidelitie and integritie, which is one of the necessary conditions; and according to all those Doctors, they who receive a Sacrament without necessarie dispositions commit sacriledge; and if through bashfulnesse and shame (which is incident to women) any thing be omitted, the confession is also of no force: now to what rack and torture is a poore soul redacted by the means of this confession according to the maximes of the Romish Church; and to how many is this confession, (which they preach so necessary to salvation, and without which, say they, none can be saved,) cause of scandall and stumbling block to make them fall headlong into hell? and who

following

following that, can be ſaved in the Church of *Rome*, if this doctrine be found to be as true before God, as it is preached and written before men?

It is not yet ſufficient, though they have fidelitie to merit abſolution, and make a good and ſufficient confeſſion; there muſt (ſay they) be further in confeſſing a conſtant reſolution of amendment of that which is confeſſed, and all meanes and morall diligences are to be uſed for effecting it: as (for example) he who confeſſeth he hath not faſted all Lent, cannot have abſolution, and is uncapable of it, if he have not a firme reſolution in time to come to faſt all the faſting dayes, and all Lent over, and uſe all poſſible meanes to effect it; and he that confeſſeth he hath ſworne or been angry, had taken a ſurfet, or ſold or taken more than is reaſonable, & committed injuſtice, or had evill thoughts, (as of impuritie, revenge, or the like) is uncapable of abſolution, and committeth ſacriledge in receiving it, if he have not a conſtant reſolution to commit thoſe things no more, and to uſe all poſſible meanes to ſhunne all thoſe things, and the occaſions of them.

Oh! how pernicious is yet the confeſſion to many in that; for, when men fall continually in the ſame vice, and ſee themſelves obliged often to confeſſe the ſame ſinne, it is a great ſigne they have little care to amend, and that ſo, they have but few conſtant purpoſes and reſolutions that are firme at their confeſſion; but every one ought to judge himſelfe, and though they can deceive men, it is impoſſible to deceive God.

Now, who with all thoſe burdens, ſtrait obligations, and hard commandements, & with that ſo ſtrange doctrine of the Romiſh Church, can hope for ſalvation, and eſcape damnation? Let every one of that ſect make reflection upon himſelfe, and examine himſelfe in this point; I leave to every particular man to judge; and I proteſt I have ſpoken nothing here, but according to the common doctrine of all the Caſuiſts & Doctors of that Church, which is taught in the Schooles, preached in the Pulpits, and publiſhed in all the Bookes which handle this matter; and I know that no man of learning dare deny it.

Oh! how ſweet is the yoke of Chriſt in reſpect of that of the Romiſh Church? and how it is more eaſie and ſure for to be ſaved, to follow the doctrine of Chriſt and his Apoſtles, than in following the doctrines & inventions of men? And can that Church

be the true and beloved Spouse of the Son of God that reflecteth her followers, even to an impossibilitie of salvation, and out of hope of eternall glory?

Chap. XXIX.

A Comparison of the Protestant and Reformed Church, with the Church of Rome, *and in which of them two, is Salvation most certaine.*

I Have often marveiled, that the Church of *Rome*, whose doctrine is so far different from the doctrine of Christ, and which accounteth lesse of the Word of God, than any other sect that is, or hath ever been amongst Christians; which preferreth her traditions and inventions to the holy Scripture, and followeth the institution of the Sonne of God so little in all his Sacraments; which imitateth so little the life & order established and followed by the Apostles, in her Prelats and Discipline: in a word, which is so corrupted and vitiated as well both in doctrine and discipline, and where Gods Commandements are so little observed, his Sacraments so much prophaned, the Sabbath so little sanctified; where prophane vices and abhominations raigne so much; and where disorders and corruptions are to be seen almost in every place, and in all sorts of persons, that nevertheless, it is shee (amongst all others) condemneth more freely and quickly others, and which braggeth shee onely is in the way of salvation; and all others are damned that consent not to her beliefe.

And upon this doctrine which the Pope causeth his followers preach and maintaine, to retaine and draw to him the people by feare, being neither able to doe it by Scripture, nor reason; are builded and published strange conclusions, extreamly dangerous and pernicious to all other States but his owne; and that by the Jesuits and a number of other Doctors of his faction; to wit, that all they of all other sects, (except their own) whom they terme all hereticks, are worthy of death, and their Protectors also; that it is a sacrifice to God to exterminate them, either by fire or sword, or any other meane whatsoever; that they are not obliged to keepe promise with them in any thing whatsoever,

soever, they being unworthy and uncapable of it; That a Prince of a contrary Religion to theirs, being an hereticke (as they terme him) is consequently excommunicated by the Pope, who pretendeth to have authoritie over him as a Christian, and that after the Excommunication thundred out against him, he is but a Tyrant and Usurper, and false from all rights, and uncapable of the Crowne, & that no Christians should hold him for King, nor are obliged to obey him; that it is great pitty they should be suffered to live and possesse the earth, which should be onely for them and those of their beliefe: and a number of the like seditious doctrines, which are written especially by *Becanus*, *Mariana*, *Suarez*, *Bellermine* and others.

And *Parsonius* an English Jesuit and Rector of the English Colledge at *Rome*, wrote a Booke in the Reigne of that vertuous Queen *Elizabeth*, which went secretly up and downe this Kingdome, wherein he laboureth to maintaine, that those many hundred years the Kings of *England* have not been lawfull Kings, both for having (saith he) being criminall of *Laze Ma^y*, or disinherited, or bastards, or for being hereticks, and so excommunicated by the Popes, and fallen from their right; and that neither the King of *Scotland*, (to wit, *James* of thrice worthy memory) nor his posteritie, nor any other of his beliefe could pretend, nor ought to be admitted to that succession, nor yet the Earles of *Hertford*, *Derby*, *Hastings*, and others, who were next; and indeavoureth to prove, that it did appertaine by right to the King of *Spaine* as heire of *Portugall*. And upon those impertinent propositions and other imaginary pretences, the Pope was resolved to seize upon *England*, and supposing the King of *Spain* and his sister would finde too great resistance, he had intention to send his Cosen the Duke of *Parma*, a great friend of his See, who being descended from *Portugall* by his Mother, pretended some right to it, or else the Cardinall *Pharnesius* the Dukes yonger brother, and procure him to marry the Lady *Arabella*, if need were, to accommodate the busines; and to that effect, many strange practises and factions were at worke, as well within as without *England* by the Papists of the Island, which may be seene more at large in a Letter that famous and learned Cardinall *Arnauld d'Ossat* writ from *Rome* to *Henry* the 4. King of *France*, dated the 22 of *Novemb.* 1601. and is the 191 Epistle of his seventh Booke; there he mocketh all those fantastick designes,

and writeth beſides to the King his Maſter, that the Pope knowing his inclination to aſſiſt the King of *Scotland* in purſuing his juſt title, would labour to divert him ſo far as he could, and make him favour his deſignes; and many other things of this State, which are in thoſe curious Letters, and ſhew the great inclination the Pope hath for *England*, not (as they ſay) *Propter Chriſtum ſed propter Lazarum*) not for the love of Chriſt, but for the love of himſelfe.

And howſoever thoſe practiſes and maximes, and the like dangerous and pernicious opinions, relliſh not, nor are approved of the more judicious and noble ſpirits of that partie, who well ſee all to be but a Papall invention, to multiply his followers, and conſequently to augment his revenues and tributes; for there are no States of his beliefe, out of which he draweth not profit; and where he hath no ſubjects, there is nothing for him; yet they are but too much followed by multitudes of that ſect; and the attempts againſt the lives of Kings, the abominable treaſons & execrable plots and conſpiracies ſet on foot both within and without, have often been the dangerous effects of that damnable and bloudy doctrine.

And to ſpeake truth, a State of a contrary Religion to theirs, is not ſecure where many of them thinke to have power, and pretend to have authoritie; for the Pope never faileth to have his Agents amongſt them, whereof they which are of any religious Order, are the moſt dangerous, becauſe they being Members of great companies, are men who have intelligence and factions; and beſides, they depending altogether on their Generalls, who (for the moſt part) are *Italians*, and engaged to the Pope, and they having made vow of obedience to him, what affection ſoever they beare towards their Princes, they dare not but further and advance the Intereſts of the Biſhop of *Rome* in every thing; for they are deſtinated to that end; and if they faile, they may expect to be blamed; and ſo they ought to be holden for ſpies and diligent inſtruments for the progreſſe of his deſignes; and matches and firebrands; which being not able to advance his Kingdome in time of peace, labour by all meanes to ſtirre up warres and diſſentions in Kingdomes and Common-wealths; to fiſh (as they ſay) in troubled waters, and effect in thoſe confuſions that which they could not get done in time of peace; as it hath been wiſely remarked and propoſed in this preſent Parliament

ment not long agoe at a conference with the Lords, delivered by a rare and eminent man; and daily experience ſhould make that truth but too well knowne in this Kingdome. And I may ſpeake ſomething of it, for being in the Romiſh Church and beyond the Seas, I was twice ſpoken to come hither with another who was then profeſſour in Theologie, and that by a great Politician, who hath expreſſe Commiſſion from the Pope to ſend, and who was the onely Counſell of that notable Cardinall, who theſe fifteene yeares and above doth keepe in warres and troubles almoſt all Europe.

But to come backe to our diſcourſe, if God by his providence did not hinder many, not ſuffering that abominable doctrine to be ſo eaſily beleeved of every one, as it is freely publiſhed, and if even by the mercy of God, there were not ſome generous and honeſt minds among them, lovers of concord and honour, who no wayes beleeving thoſe maximes, wou'd not for any thing in the world degenerate from the goodneſſe and generous diſpoſitions of their natures to engage themſelves in vile actions; wee would ſee worſe and more unhappie effects; for that is a bloudy doctrine, enemy of peace & quietnes, and neither can, nor ought to be rellíſhed by judicious men, who make profeſſion of honour; for we finde in no place that Chriſt and his Apoſtles did plant the faith of the Goſpell by fire and ſword, or that ever they aſſayed to extirminate all the idolatrous people by death and deſtroy them, that they might people their Lands with Chriſtians; but as there is great difference betwixt the doctrine of Chriſt, and the doctrine of the Biſhop of *Rome*, ſo are alſo their actions and proceedings very contrary.

And I beleeve, if the noble and generous minds of that partie would take the pains diligently to cõſider theſe great differences and the deteſtable maximes of their Doctors, they would queſtionleſſe abhor the doctrine that begetteth them; but the ſubtiltie of the Prieſts indeavour to ſtop their eares with an ignorant and blind faith to hinder them from receiving the inſtructions of the truth which are to be ſeen in the holy Scripture. Oh but I would thinke my labour well ſpent, if it would pleaſe the holy Spirit to touch the hearts of ſome one by the reading of this little Treatiſe, and make them ſee the blindnes wherein they endeavour to detaine them.

I have ſet downe (it may be) divers things which may give

light to informe many, who living in darkneſſe, would not have been aware of their darkneſſe; and if any deſire a larger information, I have written nothing, which I am not ready to maintaine by word, and give a more ample explanation for the ſatisfaction and profit of ſoules. If in ſome thing I have not cited many Authours in ſome points, I have done it purpoſely to ſhun prolixitie, and the things being common (amongſt the learned eſpecially) in the Romiſh Church, and others not being men to turne over the Bookes of thoſe which write thereof, I thought the number of citations would be needleſſe; and if any in the Romiſh Church, either out of ignorance or malice, inſult againſt mee, and tax me of any untruth; I promiſe to enlarge this Treatiſe with more proofes, and give cauſe to all men to confeſſe that I have written nothing untrue; but if the truth apparelled in this manner, hath been any way diſpleaſing to ſome, I cannot promiſe that being otherwiſe trimmed, it will be more pleaſing.

But to aſſure men the more, and confirme them in their reſolutions they may have for the true faith, I ſay, that even although the difference of the doctrine of the Church of *Rome*, from the doctrine of Chriſt, and his Apoſtles, ſhould not condemne her of untruth, it would be condemned by her workes; for our Saviour ſaith, that *the good or evill tree is knowne by its fruits*; and though it did not appeare that the doctrine of the reformed Proteſtant Church came neerer to the doctrine of Chriſt and his Apoſtles, than that of the Romiſh Church, and ſo that ſhee ſhould be the true Spouſe of the Son of God, and ſhee with whom the ancient doctrine of Chriſt Jeſus hath been and is conſerved, and conſequently the perfecteſt alſo, that is, the ſureſt and beſt, and which onely ought to be termed Catholike, being the perfection of the beliefe and faith drawne from the conformitie with the doctrine of Chriſt; yet the fruits and works of both, ſhew ſufficiently which is the beſt and ſureſt.

Mat. 7. 17.

For my part, I profeſſe that although I had not been allured and converted by the doctrine which I have found in the reformed Church, altogether conformable to the doctrine of Chriſt, which is not to be ſeen in the Church of *Rome*; the onely knowledge and compariſon of the works of the one and the other, was capable to worke this change in mee; and when after I was become a member of this Church, I did ſee with how much more holines God was worſhipped and ſerved, than in the Church of

Rome,

Rome, then it was, that with a great joy I had reaſon to ſay thoſe words of the Patriarch, *In this place is the houſe of God, and the gate of heaven*: and have given millions of praiſes to my God for bringing me to a Church and a Land where his holy Name is ſo devoutly worſhipped, his Sacraments adminiſtred in ſuch purity, his Sabbath ſo holily kept, the Churches ſo carefully frequented, and kept ſo neatly and decently, and Divine Service ſo reverently done, and heard with ſo much ſilence. Gen. 28. 17.

I know indeed that as God hath found fault with his Angels, and that being men it is impoſſible but ſome impuritie will ſlide into our actions, & that Chriſtian Religion was never even in the time of the holy Apoſtles, but there was ſomething amiſſe, if not in doctrine at leaſt in the manners and practiſe of the faithfull; and that it is not here below, we can find the Spouſe of the heavenly Bridegroome without ſpot or wrinkle in all her actions, and that nothing in this world deſerveth the name of pure and perfect in compariſon with God, but onely in compariſon of one with another, and of the unclean thing with that which is not ſo unclean, and in leſſe or more drawing neer to the example, inſtitution, and intention of Chriſt Jeſus our good Maſter; ſo it is in that ſence, I praiſe the holineſſe of the Church I am in, for the preſent; that is, namely, in compariſon with the actions and practiſes of the Romiſh Church, which wanting true faith, cannot have true holineſſe.

But the reformed Proteſtant Church retaining true faith which was preached by Chriſt and his Apoſtles, is alſo onely capable of ſanctity, and as that faith is the onely Catholike faith, ſo is the name of Catholike juſtly due to it, excluding all others, and the Romiſh Church not holding this faith, it cannot, nor ought to be holden for a Catholique Church, nor ought the Papiſts be called Catholiques.

And now to begin the compariſon betwixt them by the houſe of God and Churches: if you enter in the Popiſh Churches, you may (it is true) ſee in moſt of them many fine pictures, rich carvings, and rare inventions, ſome in Marble ſtone, ſome Jaſpar, ſome in Porphar, and other materials, where gold and azure are not wanting; yee may obſerve alſo their ſtately architects & great number of rich ornaments of all uſuall colours, of damask, ſattin, velvet, cloth of gold and ſilver, laid over and garniſhed with precious laces and embroyderings; there ye may find alſo many

veſſels,

veſſels, and utenſils, and boxes for reliques of gold and ſilver. In a word, a multitude of curious and ſumptuous objects, very fit to delight the eye, and which agree better with the ancient ceremoniall Church, than with that of the Goſpel; and we may ſay all thoſe magnificences are but vanity before God, if it be not accompanied with devotion; becauſe *all the glory of the King's daughter* (ſaith the Pſalmiſt) *is within, and in the heart:* but that is much wanting in the Romiſh Church: for if you go into their Churches, eſpecially the Pariſh Churches in time of publique Service, ye ſhall ſee few that pray to God, or ſeem attentive to the myſteries, but many prating or doing worſe; here dogs playing, there little children crying, while in the mean time ſome Prieſts are in ſinging for the moſt part confuſedly without reſpect or reverence, and things which almoſt none of the people underſtand, and there is commonly ſuch a noiſe that it reſembleth rather a Market, than the houſe of God; this I ſay with that which followeth, for them who have not ſeen thoſe things.

Pſal. 45. 14.

But in the reformed Churches, praiſed be God, it is not ſo, and I have received very great comfort and edification, ſeeing the ſilence which is kept there both before and in the time of Service, how every one carrieth his Bible and book of Prayer to read them with the Miniſters, if they cannot hear; how every one ſingeth devoutly and orderly without haſte or anticipation, endeavouring to ſmell and taſte the meaning of thoſe holy words; and if there be any thing to be further deſired in this, it is to follow the notes exactly to keep a greater uniformitie, as they do in the reformed Churches of *France* and *Holland*; and to that end that the Clerks were Muſicians enough that they might be the more exact therein, and that the notes and tones were ſo eaſie that they might be the better ſung by all the people, as it is in other places. For it is true, that a devout and harmonious ſinging raiſeth the ſpirit much to God, and comforteth and maketh glad the ſoul. Thence was it that the divine Pſalmiſt was wont to ſing his Pſalmes not only with his voice, but on the harp and organs, and other muſicall inſtruments, on which he exhorteth us to ſing and praiſe God as he did; but uſing them, or not uſing in the Church being not a point of faith, but of diſcipline onely, it ought wholly to be remitted to the diſpoſition of the Church, to which every one ought to joyn inſeparably, and ſubmit himſelf in humilitie of ſpirit, ſo long as ſhe doth continue orthodox,

orthodox; and we ought to beleeve that the assistance of the holy Ghost shall never be wanting to her in every point of discipline expedient for the salvation of the faithfull.

And I will say further to the glory of God, and to the edification of the Reader, that not onely in Churches, but even in private houses, God is better served than amongst the Papists; for, amongst them there are never any prayers almost in publike, and I remember seldome to have seen any such thing practised in an infinite number of houses, both of Nobles and others where I have been; but in the Reformed Churches, it is almost common amongst the Nobles, and it is very ordinarily practised amongst the people; and if there be any defect in that dutie, we may say the mixture and bad example of Papists hath been a great cause thereof here. But it is credible that all things will be amended by the zeal of this Honorable Parliament, and the discipline of the faithfull will be altogether throughly reformed, against all the imprecations of Arminians and Papists, false Prophets and ill fore-tellers of the confusion which they doe wish to this Kingdome; but the Ecclesiasticall discipline of the Reformed Churches in *France* (which you may see Englished) shew evidently, that good and happy order may be established in Church-government without such connivances with Popish fashions.

Now let us come to the solemnities of the Sabbaths and holy dayes: it is certain that the Pope minding more the profit of his Priests than the salvation of his flock, hath instituted too many holidayes in the Romish Church, to the great hurt (questionlesse) of poore people, who cannot conveniently be so often idle, but hath need to work more to gain their living; and therefore complain often; and the institution of God hath been very discreet in ordering six dayes to labour, and the seventh to rest, and spend the same in his service; and if in some places of the Reformed Churches the people be commanded to keep close their shops some other dayes through policie; that is onely to give some time of recreation to the Apprentises, and those who are not in libertie, not under any precept of sin or damnation, as doth the Pope, and the Romish Church, to keep holy dayes as strictly as the Sundayes; but onely under some pain or pecuniarie penaltie; and we see that in the Romish Church the holidaies

and Sundayes being of equall obligation, they are observed equally, that is very evill, for they will go (it may be) to some Monastery, if there be any, or to some other place, and heare a little Masse for a quarter or half an houre, which they hear even for the most part very irreverently, and onely for fashions sake, and because it is commanded under pain of sin; and this is all the sanctification the most part give to holy dayes and Sabbaths in that which concerneth the worship; and in the time of the publique Service, which is of the great Masse, the Mattins, and Vespers, in towns where they may have half-houre Masses at command, there is almost no body in Parish Churches but the Priest and some few women and folk, whom they terme commonly Image-eaters, and superstitieux; the rest of the time is spent either in Tavernes, which are open all the day long, or at games and pastimes, which are publiquely suffered, and commonly frequented more freely on the Sabbaths, which God from his owne mouth hath commanded to be sanctified, than on a holiday of their devotion, which is onely commanded by the Pope.

And what can be said here, but that it is to make void the commandment of God for a humane invention and tradition, and account more of the commandments and precepts of men than of the commandments of God? Oh happie are the people which have the Lord onely for their God, by whose Word they strive to be ruled, and directed in every thing, and which solemnise the whole Sabbath with all the respect and devotion they are able.

Which I seeing so faithfully observed in this Kingdom of *England*, and besides that the Service of God was so reverently celebrated, the Churches so much frequented of all Noble and ignoble, rich and poore, I confesse I often thanked and do thank my God, for having delivered me out of the captivitie of *Egypt*, and from that Idolatrous people, among whom I lived imployed in gathering of straw, and in unprofitable works; for having (I say) delivered me with a strong hand in despight of all the enterprises and power of the enemies of the truth, for having brought me through the sea confounding and drowning therein all the iniquities and pursuing of mine enemies, and bringing me to this Land flowing with the milke and honey of heavenly

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and earthly blessings, to this Countrey of *Sion*, and this *Jerusalem* and place of peace, whereas the Gospel is preached in greater puritie, so the Service of God is celebrated with greater perfection and reverence than in any Kingdom of the world, and is likely yet to be better, by the care and zeal of this thrice worthie Senate.

It is true, that as the bodies are composed of divers members, and of different qualities and conditions; so all they which are of the reformed Church are not Saints: and there are some vices to be found in many, and doubtlesse but too many; and if I dare not say few, yet I may say truly not neer so many as in the Romish Church, as well in that wch concerneth the service of God, as in that which concerneth the policie both of Ecclesiasticall and Civill; for it hath often been observed, and I have seen it with my eyes, the famous Cities, yea, and States, governed by those of the reformed Churches, did live in good order and policie, which after being falne into the hands of Popish governors, (commonly greater friends of their particular profit than of the glory of their Princes, and the publique peace and good) have in a short time lost their felicitie and prosperitie, and changed their good policie into confusion and disorder; this truth is known to many more than to me.

And if one will but look upon this Noble Kingdom, and all the States, especially which e[illegible]peace under Princes and Governors of the Reformed Religion, and likewise on the States which are governed by those of the Romish Church, especially on those which are under the dominion of the Bishop of *Rome*, and over whom he domineereth with greatest authoritie, there is no man who will not see the great difference; and they who have been in *Italy*, and have any knowledge of the government of the Popes territories, know sufficiently what comparison there is betwixt the policie of the one with the other.

Ye shall know (saith Christ) *the tree by its fruits*; and they who produce such fruits of confusion and disorder, ought not in my opinion, nor cannot be thought good trees; and as trees bring forth good or bad fruits according to the proportion of sap which they draw from the earth which giveth them both life and action; so must we beleeve that the government of people followeth commonly the doctrine and beleefe which animateth them, Mat. 7. 20.

them, and where we ſee thoſe diſorders, that it is not the ſpirit and doctrine of truth which governeth them; for Juſtice, Order, and Peace are his inſeparable companions; but rather the ſpirit of errour, which being a friend of diſorder, produceth nothing but the like fruits and effects, and every where bringeth confuſion.

And if it happen that any States leaving the beleefe of the Romiſh Church embrace the Reformed, you ſee incontinent their government totally altred, their policie to be changed to the better, and all things eſtabliſhed in better order; and as States and Provinces following this doctrine of the infallible truth, are kept and maintained in better order and policie, ſo ordinarily alſo do they flouriſh in greater luſtre and glory, in greater wealth and proſperitie.

And I may ſay likewiſe, that the Princes even of that beleef have ſeldome found more faithfull and affectionate ſubjects and ſervants than thoſe of the Reformed Religion, both in peace and war; and howſoever they have ſometimes ſuffered oppreſſions, nevertheleſſe, the murthers and infamous attempts and perfidious treaſons againſt the State, or the perſons of their Lords, have been little found amongſt their practiſes, But they have often ſhewed they had rather ſuffer perſecutions with patience, than abandon themſelves to infamous actions, unworthie of the honour and doctrine of Chriſtia[illegible]

Thoſe States alſo who are not ſo faſt bound and tied to the intereſts of the Pope, having no cauſe to complain nor diſtruſt their practiſes, and even ſeeing much publique good to follow upon their managing, and good and wiſe governing, beſides that they often imploy many of them in important occaſions, and of very great truſt, they gratifie them yet ſo much as to ſuffer them, judging themſelves in ſafety and ſecurity with them, not miſtruſting they can receive any hurt from them; becauſe thoſe Churches having the Law and Word of God for rule of their faith, they have it alſo for ſquare of their life, endeavouring to conform their actions thereunto, and commit nothing which may derogate from the condition of the faithfull: which I write more willingly as knowing it even from the confeſſion of their greateſt enemies, ſo as we may ſay that of the Cantique, *& inimici noſtri ſunt judices, Our enemies are Judges of it*: and I my ſelfe

Deut 33. 31.

have

have heard it oftentimes from the moſt judicious of the Romiſh Church.

And if the Romaniſts would carry themſelves with ſo great modeſtie and fidelity towards the Princes and States under which they deſire to live, they ſhould receive (queſtionleſſe) the ſame kindneſſe and gratification; but as their doctrine is much different, ſo are often the effects; not but amongſt them there are found many noble and generous minds, lovers of tranquillitie and peace, and of the glory and proſperitie of the States in which they remain: But becauſe the Biſhop of *Rome* who is never content with his own, but is inſatiable of wealth as be all his Clergie, keepeth continually a congregation of Cardinals of purpoſe by him, which borrow the name and pretext *De propaganda fide*, for increaſing the faith; but indeed hearkneth to nothing more affectionately than to the means of ſetling and increaſing the power and dominion of the Pope, and conſequently to augment the revenues and profits of the Clergie, eſpecially that of *Rome*; and to that end ſendeth continually abroad, and entertaineth ſo many agents as he is able amongſt his adverſaries, to whom he giveth commiſſion to uſe all means, and leave nothing unattempted for the increaſing of his Empire there, promiſing them great recompence if they have good ſucceſſe in their deſignes, and if by chance they fall into the ſnares which they have laid for others, and find themſelves catched in the gins of deſtruction which they would have prepared for others, and die or be taken in the execution of their enterpriſes, they ſhall be holden and eſteemed Martyrs, and written up in the Catalogue of the Saints; and although they die as Traitors, and diſobedient, and refractory to the Princes and States, to which they owe obedience and ſubmiſſion, notwithſtanding they ſhall be reputed as dead for the faith, and for the glory of the Goſpel, to which their doctrine is ſo contrary as well as their actions.

And on thoſe frivolous hopes, a number of ſilly fooles have engaged themſelves in ſo deſperate actions and execrable enterpriſes, that the onely thinking on them would fright Barbarians, very far queſtionleſſe from the modeſty which is required in the ſpirits of Chriſtians; as hath been often enough ſeen in this Kingdome; eſpecially in that damnable conſpiracy of the Powder-Treaſon, forged rather in the Devills ſhop than in the

braines of men, but discovered and brought to naught by the providence and bountie of God, who hath manifested himselfe so clearely in this and many other occasions both before and after, to watch in the protection of this State since the time of the reformation, that it is not to be doubted, but he would thereby shew, that as this people was his people, his Nation and heritage, so would he testifie himselfe to be their God. And notwithstanding the Pope and his Supposts, have laboured often both before and after that, as well by open force, as by secret conspiracies and hidden enterprises, to involve this whole State in ruine. Nevertheless, his Instruments and Agents have ever lost themselves, and all have falne out to their shame and confusion: As I hope all those Rebells Papists of *Ireland*, who at this present are up in Armes against their Prince and the faithfull, in all crueltie and execrations, will doe one of these dayes; so that it may be truly said this of the *Psal.* 147. 9. *The Lord hath not dealt so with all the Nations.*

Psal.147. 9.

But God having continually shewed himselfe so good and mercifull to this his people, it is their part to blesse him with their whole heart, and render him eternall thankesgiving; and my part also, who desire that favour to be holden a member thereof the rest of my life, to joyne with them, and offer also to that good God the sacrifices of praises and thankesgiving, which I doe with my whole heart, praying him continually to shew himselfe the God, Protectour, Saviour, and the Ruler of his poore people, and that he would continue to powre out upon them all heavenly and earthly blessings, and preserve the puritie and sinceritie of his holy Word among them; and if there be any thing wanting, or to be purged in their practise and discipline, that he would cleanse them from all filth and Tares, which might in time corrupt the good graine; that he would make that order and pollicy to shine amongst them which is agreeable to him, and which he hath instituted and taught by his Apostles; that he would also impart the same favours to all the Churches and Nations where his holy Name is called upon; that he would blesse the Princes which governe and maintaine them, and draw and bring to his fold, all the soules which are gone astray in any part of the world; that he would open their eyes, and let them see their blindnesse and errour, and bring them

them to the sight and knowledge of the truth, and of the pure and perfect beliefe, which is left and taught to us in his Word; that being but one Fould and one Flocke, under one sole Pastour Christ our Saviour and Master, wee may all of us serve Him in holinesse and justice, in peace and union the rest of our dayes, and hereafter wee may enjoy eternall happinesse, through our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom with the eternall Father, and glorious Spirit, be all honour, praise, and glory, might, majestie, and dominion, now and for evermore,

AMEN.

FINIS.

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